United Nations S/PV.6107

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6107th meeting

Monday, 20 April 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Ilkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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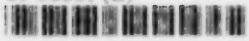

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Pascoe: It is a pleasure to be with the Council once again today discussing the important issue of the Middle East. We are again at an important juncture as the international community prepares to step up its diplomatic engagement towards the peace process. United States Envoy Senator George Mitchell met with Prime Minister Netanyahu on 16 April and with President Abbas the following day, midway through a regional tour. We welcome his stated commitment to vigorously pursue the creation of a Palestinian State as part of a comprehensive regional peace strategy of the Obama Administration which aims to integrate and develop the Arab Peace Initiative.

The Quartet remains firmly committed to the goal of a two-State solution. Quartet envoys met in the United Nations office in Ramallah on 17 April to discuss plans to advance the peace process and agreed to hold regular meetings in the region. The Secretary-General strongly supports a reinvigorated role for the Quartet. Next week, King Abdullah of Jordan will meet with President Obama during the first official visit by an Arab leader to discuss the regional peace process. Palestinian President Abbas is expected shortly afterwards, and, in May, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu plans to visit Washington following completion of an internal Israeli review of national security priorities.

The Secretary-General has welcomed the formation of the new Israeli Government, which was sworn in on 31 March. He stated his expectation that the Middle East peace process will resume, with the aim of achieving an independent and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, and a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace as envisaged in Security Council resolutions.

Allow me to turn to the situation in Gaza and southern Israel. During this reporting period there has been very little progress on the key elements outlined in Security Council resolution 1860 (2009): the commitment of the parties to a durable and sustainable ceasefire; opening the crossings for humanitarian access and materials for recovery; and intra-Palestinian reconciliation. For the international community to sustain its commitment to a resumption of the peace process, those principles are indispensable.

While there has been a significant drop in violent incidents this reporting period, the situation remains fragile in the absence of a proper ceasefire regime. Although there were almost two weeks without violence, there were 30 rockets and mortars fired by Palestinian militants at southern Israel, and the Israeli military carried out two air strikes in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli army reported on 13 April that a Palestinian vessel laden with explosives exploded in the vicinity of an Israeli naval ship without causing injury. Egyptian efforts to combat smuggling continue, and on 15 April the Egyptian police reportedly found 900 kilogrammes of explosives along Egypt's border with Gaza. On 10 April, Egyptian security forces arrested 18 people for allegedly smuggling weapons and cash into Gaza.

The Israeli policy of near total closure of the Gaza Strip, which has been in force since the Hamas takeover in June 2007, has continued in the wake of Operation Cast Lead. Over 73 per cent of all imports during the reporting period consisted of foodstuffs and cleaning materials. Basic needs for the population, such as food and blankets, have largely been met. The strict limitation on foodstuffs and other commodities allows agencies to maintain basic relief services such as food distributions, which remain at the same levels this month as last month. The World Food Programme is reaching 365,000 beneficiaries; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is reaching 750,000.

While we welcome the Israeli Cabinet decision to allow all kinds of foodstuffs into Gaza without restriction, we note that each individual food shipment still requires extensive coordination with the Israeli authorities. I would also note that our assistance to the people of Gaza should, of course, not be limited to food, blankets and medical supplies. Broader humanitarian assistance and early recovery are impossible without Israel providing adequate entry of fuel, cash and materials that are needed to repair schools, clinics, sanitation networks and shelters.

The total ban on the import of petrol and diesel has continued since 2 November 2008, with the exception of small quantities delivered to UNRWA. In the past month, Israel allowed the transfer of approximately half of Gaza's power plants' industrial fuel needs. As a result of the industrial fuel shortages, most Gazans continue to experience intermittent power cuts.

The ban on the import of spare parts necessary to maintain the electrical network and bring it up to full capacity exacerbates this situation. Some 10 per cent of the population remains without any electricity due to a lack of necessary materials needed to fix damage sustained to the network during Israel's military offensive. So far, only two truckloads of electrical transformers and cables have been allowed entry into Gaza since then.

Strict limitations on cash entering Gaza make many humanitarian and relief programmes impossible. On 7 April, Israel allowed in a transfer of only 50 million shekels out of 250 million requested to pay for the salaries of 60,000 Palestinian Authority staff. The total monthly cost of Palestinian Authority salaries in Gaza is 120 million shekels.

There is still limited material for network repairs. Only one truck of cement and a limited quantity of plastic piping were allowed entry into Gaza in the past month. They were used for some small-scale water and sanitation projects. The importance of improving water and sanitation is clear from clinical records at UNRWA primary health-care clinics in the Khan Younis area. Those records show that water and sanitation-related infectious diseases are increasingly prevalent in 2009 compared to the year 2008.

The lack of access to Gaza is deeply frustrating. At the 2 March donor conference hosted by the Government of Egypt at Sharm el-Sheikh, the international community pledged some $4.5 billion for the reconstruction of Gaza. The Palestinian reconciliation process that we all hoped would provide a framework for reconstruction has not, however, moved forward. The United Nations has and will continue to support early recovery and reconstruction efforts in Gaza. To that end, we are working to ensure our readiness to support programming once conditions allow for it. In order to further those efforts, the Special Coordinator and his Deputy are intensifying their visits to Gaza. However, without the materials for recovery and reconstruction the process cannot begin, and that requires a substantial easing by Israel of its policy of closure of the Gaza Strip, including steps to return to the framework of 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.

With regard to the Gaza Board of Inquiry, on 8 April the Secretary-General received the members of the Board, who shared their conclusions and recommendations with the Secretary-General and informed him that they were still in the process of finalizing their report. He expects to receive the full report in the near future and to decide what to do at that point.

Following Prime Minister Fayyad's early resignation and the end of his Government's mandate, President Abbas asked him on 31 March to remain in office until a new Government was formed. Palestinian reconciliation talks adjourned for the third time on 2 April. While some progress was reportedly made in the talks, there has been no agreement on the composition or political platform of a transitional Government. Talks are scheduled to resume later this month. We continue to support Egyptian efforts aimed at uniting the Palestinian factions under one Government, under the leadership of President Abbas, on the basis of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) principles.

The divide between Gaza and the West Bank continues to grow at the expense of the population of Gaza, as can be seen with health referrals outside of Gaza. As a result of the Hamas takeover of the Referral Abroad Department on 22 March, only patients with referrals approved prior to that takeover and a small number of patients whose referrals are facilitated by the Peres Center for Peace and by Physicians for Human Rights were allowed access to special medical treatment. The United Nations is actively engaged with the Palestinian Authority and Hamas in Gaza to facilitate a resolution of that issue.

Five United Nations mine action teams continue to work in Gaza, conducting risk assessments and training in unexploded ordinance safety. There have been no developments regarding the location of the unexploded bombs that went missing in February 2009. A number of issues continue to await approval from the Israeli authorities, including agreement on a means by which specialized equipment can be imported into Israel. Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit remains in captivity, despite Egyptian mediation efforts to secure his release in exchange for a number of the 11,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Let me now turn to the efforts of the Palestinian Authority regarding institution-building and security reform. The international community continues to support those efforts and plans to convene the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the next several weeks are being discussed. During this reporting period, the Palestinian Authority has begun revising and upgrading its budget process in preparation for the 2010 budget and 2011-2013 Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. Nevertheless, challenges remain, including the absence of timely and predictable budget support. Despite the large sums of money pledged last month in Sharm el-Sheikh, the Palestinian Authority still has great difficulty paying monthly salaries, which severely impacts its long-term planning process and undermines the reform agenda.

On Palestinian security issues in the West Bank, the reporting period has witnessed an increase in activity by Palestinian Authority forces. They targeted criminal gangs, making a number of arrests and recovering a quantity of weapons and stolen cash, and also shut down a reported explosives manufacturing laboratory in a mosque in Qalqiliya. During the reporting period, 10 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank and 95 were injured as a result of clashes with the Israel Defense Forces and settlers. Those incidents included seven violent instances in which Israeli settlers targeted Palestinians and their property, which, however, was down from 26 such incidents in the previous period.

On 2 April, a 13-year-old Israeli was killed in an attack on a settlement, in which another Israeli child was injured. On 8 April, clashes erupted between approximately 200 Israeli settlers, some armed, and the residents of the Palestinian village of Sofa, where the killer had reportedly sought refuge. The Israeli army intervened and 15 Palestinians were injured, including 11 by live ammunition from Israeli troops and settlers. Six other Israelis were reportedly injured during the period.

Elsewhere in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Israeli settlement activity continues. Major construction work is under way in the three settlement blocs surrounding East Jerusalem to the North, East and South. In addition to the construction of housing units, road infrastructure construction is ongoing, creating further obstacles to a viable, contiguous Palestinian State. On 31 March, Israeli settlers from the Efrat settlement began their own construction of a road. As we have said repeatedly, settlement activity runs contrary to the basis of the two-State solution and must be frozen.

The number of obstacles to continued movement in the West Bank remains constant at more than 600, which continues to prevent normal social and economic life. Also in the West Bank, the barrier continues to be constructed within occupied Palestinian territory in deviation from the Green Line and contrary to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. The Government of Israel has taken no action to evacuate settlement outposts during this reporting period in accordance with its Road Map obligations.

East Jerusalem remains an issue of serious concern. Palestinian institutions there remain closed by Israeli order and contrary to Israel's Road Map obligations. During this reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished two Palestinian structures, in addition to the so-called deterrent demolition of the family home of a Palestinian who carried out a terrorist attack against Israelis on 2 July 2008. During that demolition, a Palestinian man was shot and killed as he drove his car into Israeli security forces. Three Israeli border police were injured.

Turning to regional affairs, the Secretary-General attended the League of Arab States summit on 30 March in Doha, which brought together 17 Arab leaders. The summit recommitted the members of the Arab League to the Arab Peace Initiative while calling for Israeli steps towards the Initiative.

United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry met with Jordanian Minister for Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh on 8 April and on 15 April with Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs Walid Al-Moualem to discuss efforts to move the peace process forward.

The situation in the occupied Syrian Golan was quiet during the reporting period, although Israeli settlement activity continues. One Syrian was detained by Israeli security forces for crossing the Alpha Line in the disengagement area on 14 April and returned to Syria the same day.

In Egypt, it was announced that a cell of 49 persons led by an alleged member of Hizbollah had been arrested in November 2008. The Egyptian Government expressed its grave concern at external interference on sovereign Egyptian territory. The search for other members of this cell is reportedly continuing.

On Lebanon, the overall situation there remained stable during the reporting period, despite a number of disconcerting security incidents. The assassination of the Deputy PLO representative in Lebanon, Kamal Medhat, on 23 March, which was reported in last month's briefing, was the first targeted killing in Lebanon since September 2008. On 27 March, a shooting incident took place in Baalbek between gunmen suspected of drug trafficking and the Lebanese Armed Forces, resulting in the death of an alleged drug baron. Subsequently, on 13 April, in what seems to have been a related incident, armed gunmen ambushed a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol in a nearby area, leaving four soldiers dead and one critically injured. The Lebanese Armed Forces are continuing their search for the perpetrators. Syria has deployed troops along the border between the two countries in order to prevent fugitives from escaping across the frontier.

The five-week period for candidates to register for the June parliamentary elections ended on 7 April. Seven hundred and two candidates have been registered, although, according to the electoral law, they can withdraw from the race until 21 April. Discussion of candidate lists continues within each of the two major alliances contesting the election.

The construction of an additional 232 temporary shelters in the area adjacent to the Nahr al-Bared camp was completed in March, bringing the total amount of temporary shelters built by UNRWA to more than 800, housing some 650 families. Relations between the local community and the Lebanese Armed Forces have improved in recent months following an easing of access in areas adjacent to the old camp.

Following the establishment of diplomatic ties between Lebanon and Syria on 15 October 2008 and the approval by President Sleiman of the first Syrian ambassador to Lebanon, the Lebanese ambassador to the Syrian Arab Republic arrived in Damascus today.

The overall situation during the past month in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has remained generally quiet. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continue to carry out intensive joint operations, with a particular focus on possible rocket launching positions. Israeli air violations continued on an almost daily basis during the reporting period.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of addressing the situation in Gaza and of implementing the provisions of resolution 1860 (2009). Moreover, for the sake of the people of the region, there must be peace and not simply further process. We therefore encourage the early resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on all core issues without exception, as agreed by the parties and as called for in resolution 1850 (2008).

The international community remains fundamentally committed to and engaged in efforts to achieve the goal of the two-State solution, the only solution aimed at guaranteeing both the security of the State of Israel and the creation of an independent and viable Palestinian State. The framework for peace remains unchanged: the establishment of two States living side by side in peace and security on the basis of the principle of land for peace and a just and comprehensive regional peace consistent with resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

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	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. İlkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and settlement of disputes

Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and settlement of disputes

Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, Indonesia, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/189, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Pascoe: Last September, the Security Council met under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Burkina Faso for a high-level debate on mediation (*see S/PV.5979*). During that debate, the Security Council identified many of the key issues and challenges facing the international community in resolving disputes peacefully. In its presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/36), the Council invited the Secretary-General to provide a report on

> "mediation and its support activities, which takes into account experiences of the United Nations and other key actors, and makes recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations mediation".

The report before members responds to that and benefited from a broad consultation process. In addition to internal consultations, the report drew on the experiences and views of Security Council members, individual Member States, all those acting as mediators, regional and subregional organizations, and non-governmental organizations. It attempts to synthesize many years of United Nations experience in mediating conflict both between and within States.

The report provides an opportunity to take stock of efforts under way in the Secretariat, under the lead of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), to bolster and professionalize the mediation capabilities of the United Nations. The Secretary-General has called for a more proactive use of preventive diplomacy by the United Nations, and our ability to support and carry out mediation is central to that vision. The release of the report also coincides with critically important efforts by Member States and the Secretariat to examine the present and the future of United Nations peacekeeping.

These issues are, of course, closely related. A United Nations that is more effective in the practice of mediation will be more adept both at heading off conflicts before they become full-blown crises and at bringing such crises to a peaceful and lasting end before it is necessary to resort to peacekeeping. Effective mediation can help us to arrive at sound agreements that can be successfully implemented, and

then assist the facilitation and dialogue needed throughout the later phases of the effort.

Mediation must continue as a central part of the process of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. For example, the head of the United Nations peacebuilding mission in Sierra Leone, Michael von der Schulenburg, has been busy in recent weeks encouraging dialogue to defuse the most recent political tensions there. We might also witness the efforts of Special Representative Doss in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and former President Obasanjo to bring peace to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Strengthening mediation capacity is also an important objective to keep in mind, therefore, as we strive collectively at the United Nations to do a better job in the area of peacebuilding.

I would like to turn to some of our key initiatives and recent efforts in the mediation field. These are part of a conscious effort to reshape the Department of Political Affairs into a more action- and field-oriented operation that can move more quickly and at an earlier stage to help prevent conflicts from spreading and to deliver faster and more reliable support to peace processes. As directed by the Secretary-General, we are working to put in place the expertise, financial resources, partnerships and knowledge base to attain those objectives. We deeply appreciate the support we have received from members of the Council and other Member States for those efforts.

The political support and financial resources that Member States have provided through the regular budget and voluntary contributions have enabled us to strengthen our regional divisions and to establish the Mediation Support Unit (MSU). The Unit has been further complemented with a standby team of mediation experts able to deploy to negotiations around the world on short notice and to provide advice and assistance to mediators on such themes as peace process design, security arrangements, power-sharing, wealth-sharing, natural resources management and constitution-making.

In the past year, DPA has provided mediation support to more than 20 peace processes, with the MSU exerting a multiplier effect on those efforts. We have striven to take a flexible and innovative approach to peacemaking. We have made our technical advisory services available to United Nations envoys and representatives, of course, but also to Member States, regional organizations and others that may be leading a mediation effort. We also try to provide high-quality technical support in a timely manner. Experts can now be dispatched to a mediation scene in days, not weeks. Those innovations are already making a difference in our ability to provide real support to peace processes. Let me provide some concrete examples.

In Somalia, Special Representative Ould Abdallah has spearheaded a mediation effort that many observers see as the most promising effort in years aimed at bringing about political reconciliation in that country. We provided close support to those efforts in working with the parties to develop the 26 October 2008 Djibouti Agreement.

If I might digress for a moment, I would like to mention to Council members and to others in the audience that, on Thursday, 23 April, we are holding a donors conference in Brussels to follow through on resolution 1863 (2009) on support for Somalia. As Council members know, the conference aims to raise funds for the Somali security forces and for the African Union Mission in Somalia. I hope members will urge their Governments to attend at a high level and to provide generous support.

In the Central African Republic, our political mission on the ground played a key role in carrying out an all-inclusive national political dialogue. DPA's training to the preparatory committee contributed to the success of that dialogue.

In Cyprus, we deployed facilitators to the technical working groups during the preparatory phase of the talks and continue to work closely with Alexander Downer, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, including technical support on power-sharing and property issues.

In Nepal, we continue to support Karin Landgren, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, with mediation and facilitation assistance in the implementation phases of the peace agreement.

In Iraq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General De Mistura is leading an increasingly visible role in fostering political reconciliation, supported from New York by a variety of expertise on issues relating to the disputed internal boundaries, Kirkuk, water-sharing and the constitution.

We also have supported missions led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in Darfur, Kosovo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General work either to reach peace agreements or to move through the incredibly difficult task of implementing peace accords. It is important to note that United Nations political mediation efforts are being carried out not only in classic peacemaking situations, such as in Cyprus or the Western Sahara, but also through the day-to-day work of the political missions in the field. These missions spend much of their time trying to broker dialogues and to use preventive diplomacy to put out the fires that arise.

Our services have also been put at the disposal of regional organizations that are in the lead of political processes. In Kenya, for example, where former Secretary-General Kofi Annan led the effort, our team assisted him in preparing the mediation effort and on elections, security and constitutional issues. Since September 2008, in the Comoros we have been supporting African Union efforts on an inter-Comorian dialogue.

We have also found that a regional presence can be an effective way to mediate disputes. Through the United Nations Office for West Africa, we have been able to work with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union on such issues as Mauritania and Guinea, without the deployment of a stand-alone mission. Most recently, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit has undertaken a preventive mission to Togo to consult with authorities there on recent developments in the country. That is part of our ongoing work with ECOWAS and regional leaders to prevent conflicts in the region.

Our Central Asian office in Ashgabat is leading an effort to help the five countries resolve tensions over water issues, among other issues of regional concern. A key role is being played by a specialist on natural resource management from the MSU standby team. The effectiveness of these regional efforts has encouraged our suggestion to establish a regional presence in the Central African region, as requested by members of the African Group.

It is important that our ability to move quickly to mediate disputes has been improved by the establishment of a small mediation start-up budget, funded by donors. DPA's modest travel budget cannot sustain the emergency dispatch of crisis prevention teams. We were able to deploy and sustain a small team in Madagascar to mediate the current crisis in the country; send envoys such as Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios to support regional efforts on Zimbabwe; or get former President Obasanjo's mission to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo up and running in the midst of the fighting with those extrabudgetary funds. Advance planning and ready resources are key to effective early mediation when trouble develops.

The kinds of mediation activities I have described today are now routinely expected by our envoys and representatives. Our Department has traditionally worked hard to meet these demands. However, the creation of the Mediation Support Unit and its standby team of mediation experts has given a tremendous boost to those efforts by providing readily available, in-house mediation expertise. Presently, most of our funding comes from the generosity of donors, which continues to be of critical importance.

Our challenges in the mediation of conflicts are shared by the entire international community and it is the responsibility of all of us to act in concert to solve them. To do this, it is essential that we have partnerships with Member States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Regional organizations are often best placed to take the lead in mediation efforts, and some have a wealth of mediation expertise in their own right. Where requested, we have assisted in their mediation efforts and in strengthening the mediation capacity of regional organizations. In Africa, we have benefited from the cooperation of the African Union, ECOWAS and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in mediation efforts in Darfur, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Madagascar, Guinea, Burundi and other areas.

I would like in particular to recognize the outstanding efforts in extraordinarily difficult circumstances of Djibril Bassolé, Joint African Union/United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur. We also continue working closely with SADC, the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States to build mediation capacity.

As one sign of our strong partnership with the African Union, a couple of days ago we concluded a joint assessment of our cooperation in two cases:

Darfur and Kenya. That was a very productive meeting and we are planning to follow up on our work together on Somalia.

In Europe, we have made significant strides in enhancing our mediation partnership with the European Union (EU), including the Commission. We welcome the recent discussions in the EU on developing its own mediation capacity. We look forward to working with all relevant regional actors, sharing expertise and lessons learned, developing joint training opportunities, and working together on the establishment of a geographically diverse roster of mediation experts.

We certainly recognize that many areas require improvement. Mediation requires skill and knowledge, but it can be a complex operation with its own logistics, staffing and technical requirements. If envoys are to succeed, they need more than just their individual talents and experience. We are making a systematic effort to support them in the planning and management of peace processes.

Working with other parts of the United Nations system, Member States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, we are putting a system in place that will include five levels of support for envoys: mediation planning, which would include assessment of requirements and mobilizing to meet them; the development of a small pool of operational-level on-call mediators to manage the day-to-day functions of a mediation effort; the standby team of mediation experts, which will continue for the next year; the development of a small but reliable roster of internal and external experts; and establishing a small team of geographically diverse experienced senior envoys to provide mediation advice.

We will also combine this specialized response capability with a rigorous training curriculum for our regional specialists. All political officers should have basic training on aspects of mediation. United Nations mediation capacities, its lessons learned and tools are not proprietary information; they are available to all who need them. Working together, we should promote an understanding among Member States that United Nations mediation, including good offices, facilitation and dialogue, is a service offered by the Secretary-General at all phases of a conflict. All Member States should be comfortable requesting and utilizing this service when required. We need to combine our capacity-building with confidence-building, that is, confidence that United Nations mediation is an impartial and effective tool for conflict resolution. Reticence to involve outside actors has at times translated into lost opportunities by Member States to make use of what the United Nations has to offer. We are here to help, but only if we allowed to do so.

The report makes it clear that the United Nations does not have a monopoly on mediation. This also applies to the accumulation of knowledge and best practices on mediation. We have provided leadership in developing a Web-based repository of information on mediation, called the United Nations Peacemaker, but we will need to work closely with our partners to consolidate and disseminate this knowledge. This online support tool for international peacemaking professionals has over 800 documents, with more than 300 peace agreements, and 15 operational guidance notes, with another 22 in development. United Nations Peacemaker was developed on a limited budget and will now need to be more properly maintained and upgraded.

To be successful in our collective mediation effort, we need to be constantly learning new lessons and applying them. For this reason, we have put in place a debriefing programme for senior envoys, which allows us to capture the experiences that they have had. We are also working on a peace agreement evaluation project, which will look at factors in peace processes and agreements that contribute to the sustainability of peace. We are considering other innovative programmes to take stock of lessons learned from successful mediations and mediators. Again, I want to note that these initiatives would not have been possible without the support of Member State donors, and we deeply appreciate their generosity.

In conclusion, I want to say that we have very clearly heard the call of the Security Council and the instruction of the Secretary-General to develop a more rigorous and effective approach to mediation. Mediation is a Charter activity of the United Nations and must be carried out with the highest degree of professionalism, transparency and preparation to promote peace and security. We are deeply grateful for the Council's support to date and hope to continue to earn it in the future.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome this meeting of the Security Council to address so topical an issue as that of mediation and settlement of disputes. Mediation, quite clearly, is a very cost-effective political method for the international community to respond to conflict situations. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for having presented his first report on this topic (S/2009/189), and of course to Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for today's comprehensive briefing and for his efforts to enhance United Nations mediation activities.

The description in the Secretary-General's report of the situation of United Nations mediation assistance to parties to a conflict requires study and analysis, and all the more so as a number of its provisions raise several questions. Inter alia, it sets out the rather overreaching objective of having a 'standing rapid-response mediation capacity. There is a reference to the formulation by the Department of Political Affairs of a long-term programme to assist mediation efforts. We believe that this aspect of the Secretariat's plan requires additional clarification, first and foremost as regards sources of financing. We expect this long-term programme not to involve allocating to the Department additional resources from the regular budget in addition to those provided by the relevant General Assembly decisions.

The report legitimately notes that the United Nations does not have a monopoly on mediation. The use of regional agencies and arrangements is an important mechanism provided for in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. In turn, Chapter VIII of the Charter indicates to Member States the priority to be given to resolving local disputes using those agencies and arrangements before referring them to the Security Council. A number of regional organizations have accumulated significant mediation experience. The United Nations should utilize this in its activities and approach issues of mediation on the basis of the principle of a judicious division of labour with regional and subregional structures.

In addition to cooperation with the recognized partners in this field, including the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union, cooperation with organizations actively accumulating experience, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, is promising.

The work of a mediator requires great craftsmanship and finesse. It is the result of commitment, tact and knowledge of the historical, cultural and other specificities of conflicts. We note here the importance of a careful selection of United Nations mediators on the basis of objective, universally accepted criteria. One should approach this in a balanced way, avoiding any excessive bias towards a particular political or regional group. Quite clearly, mediators' activities should be carried out transparently via the Security Council, and, when the Council has provided them with a mandate, they should be accountable to it.

In mediation, one cannot impose unilateral decisions or provide any grounds to suspect the mediator of any prejudice or bias in favour of one side or the other. Failure by the mediator to fulfil even one of those conditions unavoidably leads to the emergence of problems. It is enough to recall the situation of the settlement around Kosovo.

Experience in conflict prevention and resolution clearly shows that only mediation, which does not use force or the imposition of conditions to resolve a conflict but rather aligns the parties' positions and searches for areas of agreement and mutually acceptable solutions, stands any chance of success. On the basis of these fundamental principles, the Russian Federation participates in mediation activities and actively supports such efforts by the United Nations and other international and regional organizations.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): The Vietnamese delegation thanks you, Sir, and the Mexican presidency for taking the initiative of holding this debate of the Council on the important topic of mediation and the settlement of disputes. I thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his comprehensive briefing.

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The fact that this issue is enshrined in the Charter testifies to the importance that the United Nations attaches to the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts, including through mediation. The increase in the number of conflicts and their negative impact on international peace, security and development, together with the increase in the United Nations budget for peacekeeping, makes conflict prevention and resolution through mediation and the role of the United Nations in this connection more necessary and urgent than ever.

We welcome the publication of the Secretary-General's report on mediation (S/2009/189), which we believe will constitute a major step forward in promoting mediation as an effective tool in resolving disputes and conflicts. The Mediation Support Unit had, by late 2008, supported 18 peace processes in the world and, within the short period since its establishment in 2006, has become a very important tool for supporting the good offices and mediation efforts conducted not only by the United Nations but also by regional organizations. These efforts manifest the increasingly prominent role that the United Nations is assuming in mediation activities. Reaffirming our support for the mediation activities of the United Nations, we are of the view that, for those activities to be effective, the following principles must be observed.

First, mediators' in-depth knowledge and understanding of the disputes and conflicts taking place in their own regions and of the parties concerned, including the parties' interests and demands, both legitimate and illegitimate or controversial, put them in a better position to accurately analyse the situation and come up with objective and realistic proposals that may bring the sides together. To that end, regional and subregional organizations and personalities should be allowed and encouraged to participate and contribute. We share the Secretary-General's observation that more attention should be paid to national and local capacity-building with a view to enhancing local actors' mediating skills and abilities.

We commend the assistance extended by the United Nations Mediation Support Unit to the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of Central African States and the European Union in strengthening their mediation capacities. The United Nation's two-year work plan with the AU to build the latter's mediation capacity is an exemplary tool for such cooperation, which should be further enhanced.

Secondly, coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in mediation activities should be ensured with a view to both enhancing effectiveness and avoiding unnecessary duplication, waste of resources, unhealthy competition or rivalry that may negate each other's role and thus hamper the common search for solutions to disputes and conflicts. The history of mediating recent disputes and conflicts in all major continents, from Africa to Asia, America and Europe, further proves that, whenever such coordination exists, success is achieved and vice versa.

Thirdly, mediation efforts should focus on addressing the root causes of conflicts with due attention paid to the need to help the country or countries concerned overcome the conditions of absolute poverty and the lack of socio-economic development that rank high among the root causes of disputes and conflicts. In the view of my delegation, this approach not only helps find appropriate solutions for each specific dispute or conflict, but also avoids its hasty dramatization, which could lead to the unnecessary application of measures of last resort, such as those invoked under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which many States Members have pointed to as a cause for concern.

Last but not least, mediation, as a means of peacefully settling disputes, must be in conformity with the fundamental principles of objectivity, fairness, respect for national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and equality in international relations.

As the highest organ of the United Nations entrusted with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council has a vital role in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts, including and especially by means of mediation. The Security Council's active engagement, such as its endorsement of mediators and support for the Secretary-General in dispatching his envoys and mediators to help resolve disputes and conflicts, has highlighted the increasing importance the Council attaches to mediation activities.

Viet Nam supports strongly the consolidation of cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and United Nations missions in carrying out mediation activities to peacefully resolve disputes and conflicts. At the same time, we hold that, to preserve its integrity and ensure that it enjoys the necessary acceptance and support for its activities, the Security Council should avoid unjustified and counterproductive involvement in the work that falls under the purview of the mandates of other United Nations organs, as defined in the Charter.

Mr. Guillermet (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on organizing this open debate. We would also like to thank Mr. Pascoe for having presented the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189). The report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities is an open invitation to a joint discussion that will bear fruit and strengthen the work of the United Nations. We would also like to thank the leadership of Burkina Faso in this area.

Costa Rica has always been a major ally of peaceful dispute settlement processes. Our history has led us to value this dynamic as a factor for peace and stability. We have been witnesses to and actors in peacemaking in our region. In this Organization and in other international and regional forums, we have defended and supported mediation processes and dispute settlement not only as effective mechanisms to resolve conflicts, but also as a preventive way of avoiding them. The importance and value that the international community places on mediation will reflect its commitment to peace and its attachment to stability.

Costa Rica welcomes and fully endorses the report of the Secretary-General. It is a report of very high quality, with robust and specific recommendations that indicate the path to follow. It not only encompasses the lessons learned, but also raises the challenges that we must overcome in order to strengthen the Organization's mediation capacities. Furthermore, it accurately points to important strategic actions for moving forward in strengthening mediation as a valuable dispute settlement instrument in this Organization.

My delegation agrees that no peace agreement endorsed by the Organization can promise amnesty for crimes of genocide, crimes of war, crimes against humanity or serious human rights violations. Neither the United Nations nor the international community can shirk their collective responsibilities. Some people say that when it comes to serious crimes, the intervention of international justice could be considered an obstacle to the mediation process and, to a certain extent, could compromise its results. But can we ignore justice in the name of peace? Would we not be promoting a culture of impunity if we ignored international justice?

My country believes that there is no room for these questions because there can be no sustainable peace in such circumstances. Mediation, the instrument that we are promoting here, complements international justice and does not oppose it.

Local and national capacities are not only directed towards mediation in the conflict, but are also agents that ensure sustainability and contribute significantly to strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law in post-conflict situations. They are agents of change that become agents of stability. In that respect, cooperation with regional organizations is crucial to having a greater impact and greater effectiveness, and also to taking advantage of the successful experiences at the regional level.

Strengthening the mediation efforts of this Organization is a reliable investment. In that respect, the Organization has made important progress, which Mr. Pascoe has explained in detail. It has developed its structure in response to the request of its Members that it play a more active role in the area of mediation. It has strengthened the Department of Political Affairs by establishing the Mediation Support Unit. But let us look at this situation clearly: devoting sufficient resources to preventive action, early warning and mediation will certainly mean a reduction in the overall financial costs of the Organization.

More important than that, however, is to move away from the simple equation by which we determine that mediation is a more efficient choice in terms of costs. Rather, we should support the human dimension of a timely intervention whereby human lives are saved, human rights are protected, the displacement of populations is avoided and institutions are preserved. The premise must be that we strengthen mediation processes in order to invest more in populations and in their general well-being and not to promote mediation

because it is less expensive than any peacekeeping operation. Without a doubt, we must take those elements into account in the strategic review of peacekeeping activities that this Council will soon undertake.

We endorse and support the measures taken by the Secretary-General in favour of gender equality in mediation teams, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000), and we believe that it is important to continue to make major efforts in that regard.

Lastly, the basis of mediation is the political will of the parties to reach an agreement. That political will must be reflected in absolute respect for the United Nations Charter and a legitimate and verifiable commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. Those two elements are the axes on which any mediation process must be based, along with the confidence of the parties, and on which to build a sustainable and lasting peace.

Mr. Gouider (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to extend my sincere thanks to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his comprehensive briefing on the Secretary-General's report on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189). I would also like to extend a warm welcome to all participants in this distinctive session, which is special in terms of its timing and subject matter.

With regard to its timing, this debate is taking place in the context of an agreement on a follow-up to the meeting held last year under the presidency of Burkina Faso and in the light of presidential statement S/PRST/2008/36. We hope that our discussions today will help us move forward and reach a new vision that clarifies the mediation role played by the Security Council.

On the subject matter, I do not need to stress the special importance of mediation as a tool to settle conflicts peacefully, as specified in our Charter since last century. It is incumbent on us to enhance mediation and its support activities as a practical way to settle disputes. We should focus on positive ideas that promote dialogue and help avert the deterioration of any conflict through agreements between the parties that would end conflicts and strengthen and promote peace.

We support mediation as a peacemaking tool, as we believe it to be the most cost-effective instrument to settle conflicts on the African continent. Mediation takes into account all the important factors of the various conflicts and can play a significant role in addressing them, following the cold war and with the renewed interest in conciliatory agreements. Mediation inherently promotes a careful analysis or reconsideration of positions in a way that promotes all efforts for the ultimate peaceful settlement of conflicts.

We believe that the maintenance of international peace and security requires serious initiatives that enhance mediation and its support activities, particularly in Africa. That enhancement should not be limited to the neutrality and skills of the mediator and his or her experience, but should include an in-depth knowledge of the geography, history and culture of Africa and the root causes of the conflicts there. We believe that the African Union is the natural body to assume that task, and that it is capable of achieving effective mediation with genuine and full international support and partnership.

Nevertheless, allow me to clearly state that we have still not fulfilled our commitments. My country's experience in the mediation efforts in many African conflicts, as a member and Chairman of the African Union, has highlighted the continuing need for a new international vision for mediation and the Security Council's role in it that does not ignore the root causes of conflicts because of pressures and that effectively prioritizes the tools provided for in Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter over those of Chapter VII. It has shown the need for a vision that provides the tools to address conflicts before, not after, they deteriorate; that is based on lessons learned in supporting preventive diplomacy in Africa that strengthens the African Union and its partnerships and institutions; and that enables the Secretariat and the Mediation Support Unit to provide the necessary momentum for that dynamic union. In that way, we could put an end to ongoing human tragedies and support the international system by upholding the authority and credibility of the Security Council as a guarantor of international peace and security.

Finally, we support the Secretary-General's recommendations in their entirety and the statement to be made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We express our hope once again that our deliberations will go beyond mere

support for recommendations and will be a practical step towards planned and organized measures.

I would like to thank the delegation of Burkina Faso for preparing the draft presidential statement, which we fully support, and we look forward to its adoption at the end of our debate.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): Austria associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union later in this meeting. We would also in particular like to thank Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his substantive and very comprehensive briefing.

We are confronted with a large number of crises and new global dangers with a potential to ignite fully fledged conflicts posing threats to international peace and security. The complexity of the issues at stake and the involvement of a wide range of actors underscore the need to make use of the entire toolbox available to the United Nations and the international community. In recent years, the United Nations has conducted and supported a series of successful mediation efforts — for instance in Kenya — but Under-Secretary-General Pascoe has provided us today with an impressive complete list of the various efforts of the United Nations in this field.

Mediation should be one of the first instruments that we resort to because it has proven to be an effective tool at all stages of the conflict cycle. Disputes can, of course, best be resolved through interventions at an early stage. If such interventions are successful, we can reconcile potential adversaries before a crisis erupts.

As the ongoing discussions on the reform of United Nations peacekeeping have shown, we are confronted with a growing shortage of human and financial resources. In this situation, the added value of conflict prevention and resolution through mediation becomes ever more apparent. The Secretary-General's report (S/2009/189) therefore rightly underlines the comparative advantage of mediation in terms of cost-effectiveness, as opposed to large-scale conflict intervention and post-conflict reconstruction.

As the Under-Secretary-General's briefing has shown, successful mediation efforts must go hand in hand with other crisis prevention and crisis management activities, in particular peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We therefore support the Secretary-General's recommendation to make mediation, facilitation and dialogue expertise available to United Nations field presences. It is clear that successful mediation efforts will normally result in compromise solutions that balance the interests of former adversaries. That having been said, mediators must nonetheless make sure that the principles of the rule of law and the needs of transitional justice are respected.

Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) urge Member States and the Secretary-General to ensure increased representation of women at all levels of conflict resolution and peace processes. Yet an analysis by the United Nations Development Fund for Women shows that, in 13 major comprehensive peace processes since 2000, not one single woman has been appointed chief mediator. We hope to see more appointments of women in the future. For that to happen, it is of course clear that we, the Member States, must ourselves nominate more female candidates for such positions. Also, all mediators need to have adequate expertise in dealing with gender issues as part of their mandate. In order to achieve sustainable peace, we must ensure the availability of adequate resources for gender mediation expertise in all peace efforts.

Any effective mediator needs to be supported by the right team, with expertise and thorough knowledge of the particular situation. We commend the excellent role that the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) and the newly established standby team have played over the past year in preparing and supporting an increasing number of mediation processes. We would like to see further consolidation of the MSU's capacities. Equipping the United Nations with adequate funds and human resources remains a prerequisite for successful dispute settlement, since the right timing, readiness and quick deployment of mediation teams are crucial.

We fully support efforts to intensify cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, and note in particular the positive role that organizations such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern Africa Development Community are playing in this respect. Regional organizations in many instances have the advantage of being well acquainted with local and regional dynamics, but in some cases it must also be said that proximity and long-standing involvement can work to the detriment of potential mediators because they are not seen to be impartial and are therefore not

acceptable to the conflict parties. Depending on circumstances, the European Union therefore contributes to mediation processes either as an actor or indirectly as a supporter to third-party mediation efforts.

Mediation also creates local capacity in the target countries, thereby contributing to sustainable and locally owned conflict settlement. The United Nations should strive to strengthen operational partnerships with regional and subregional arrangements and offer support to mediation partners through the MSU.

Small and medium-sized States without vested interests in particular conflicts in a region can play a positive role. Austria, as a neutral country, has a long-standing tradition of offering and hosting good offices. In this context, let me also underline the potential of non-governmental organizations and pay tribute to the work of such institutions as Sant'Egidio in Italy or Burg Schlaining in Austria.

In conclusion, let me thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe once again for his interesting presentation. We also highly appreciate the efforts of Burkina Faso in promoting the issue of mediation and the settlement of disputes in the Council, and fully support the presidential statement to be adopted later today. We look forward to future discussions on this important matter.

Mr. La Yifan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this important open debate. We should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his briefing.

In today's world, the nature of conflicts and disputes is undergoing profound changes. Traditional inter-State conflicts are evolving into hybrids of inter-State/intra-State conflicts, and the causes of disputes are becoming increasingly complex and involve various factors such as history, territory, religion and tribe. Experience has demonstrated time and again that if we are unable to take reasonable and legitimate action at an early stage in a crisis to seek a peaceful settlement via mediation, we will have to spend considerably more time and energy after a crisis breaks out coping with the consequences of its expansion. Therefore, the peaceful settlement of disputes is an investment in the future of mankind and will certainly reap abundant peace dividends.

The peaceful settlement of disputes is one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations, and the Charter has provided theoretical guidance and bases for action in mediation and dispute settlement. As the most authoritative and representative international organization in the world, the United Nations has every reason to play a central role in mediation and dispute settlement. We appreciate the positive role played by the United Nations in settling hotspot issues in relevant areas, and expect the Organization to further enhance its mediation capacity and improve its mediation expertise so as to play a bigger role in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Strengthening the United Nations mediation and dispute settlement capacity requires full respect for the will of the parties concerned. The parties to a dispute are stakeholders in the settlement of the conflict, and only when they display full political will can United Nations mediation produce results. If the parties concerned explicitly reject United Nations mediation, the Organization will have neither the possibility nor the grounds to become involved. The United Nations should therefore try to obtain the cooperation of the parties concerned and keep the channels of communication open so as to lay a sound foundation for mediation.

On the other hand, mediation is a protracted process with inevitable setbacks and fluctuations. The international community should speak with one voice when the United Nations is engaged in mediation to support the Organization's efforts and maintain its input after a peace agreement is reached so that the results of mediation can be further consolidated.

Strengthening the United Nations mediation and dispute settlement capacity requires it to facilitate mutual understanding and accommodation between the parties concerned while maintaining neutrality and impartiality. Neutrality and impartiality are the bases of mediation, and the designation of an appropriate mediator is the key to the success of mediation. Mediation should be an inclusive process in which the mediator hears the views of all sides, has an accurate understanding of differing views and accommodates various concerns in a balanced manner. Mediation should also be a progressive process in which the mediator should have full understanding of the background of the issue, effectively coordinate relations among all parties, maintain patience and confidence, keep strict confidentiality and a low

profile, focus on facilitation and avoid assuming the responsibilities of the parties. Mediation should result in a win-win situation. The mediator should try to make the parties concerned realize that there is no such thing as a winner-takes-all solution and that it is only through flexibility and compromise that they can achieve reconciliation and a win-win outcome.

Strengthening the mediation and dispute settlement capacity of the United Nations requires addressing the question of impunity on the basis of building durable peace. Ending impunity and ensuring fairness and justice are prerequisites for upholding the good and punishing the evil. Peace can be secure only when it is based on fairness and justice. In that respect, the State concerned should play the leading role. At the same time, it is hard to truly put an end to impunity without a peaceful and stable environment. When dealing with impunity, it is necessary to take into full consideration the overall interests of peace and stability.

Strengthening the mediation and dispute settlement capacity of the United Nations requires full use of the advantages of cooperative partnership on the basis of mobilizing all relevant mechanisms of the United Nations. In its mediation efforts the United Nations should rely on the strength of its moral force and its neutrality and should work in all dimensions and at multiple levels. In this connection, it is necessary to take advantage of both the expertise of the Mediation Support Unit and the conven offered by field agencies such as peacekeeping missions. It is necessary both to engage in shuttle diplomacy and to employ the Secretary-General's good offices in order to make best use of the Organization's advantages in resources to cultivate local mediation capacities.

Strengthening the mediation capacity of the United Nations is a strategic undertaking which should be provided with adequate resources. At the same time, the United Nations should also pay attention to cooperating with the mediation efforts of its partners and should actively provide them with political, human and logistical support when necessary.

The purpose of strengthening the mediation and dispute settlement capacity of the United Nations is not to take on all the disputes of the world. We take note of the unique and important role of relevant regional organizations in settling disputes in their respective regions. China always stands for the settlement of disputes through peaceful dialogue, and we support a greater role for the United Nations and regional organizations such as the African Union in providing mediation and good offices for dispute and conflict settlement. We will continue to work with all others in making energetic efforts towards that end.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate, which is timely. We are grateful to Burkina Faso for championing this issue in the Council and to Mr. Pascoe and his team for today's briefing.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2009/189) and today's debate provide an opportunity to put the spotlight on what can be done to ensure that the mediation efforts of the international community — and especially of the United Nations — are more effective in helping to resolve conflict. It is important. The failure to generate durable peace agreements will lead to the continued scourge of conflict, which both the countries concerned and their neighbours can ill afford.

The international community's recent record in supporting mediation efforts has been mixed. We have seen some clear successes, such as Kofi Annan's leadership of the international community's efforts in Kenya and President Obasanjo's engagement in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mr. Pascoe rightly highlighted Special Representative Ould Abdallah's work to bring the political process in Somalia to a more positive stage, and President Campaore has played an important personal role in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire.

But as the Secretary-General's report makes clear, there is much more that the United Nations can and should be doing, and we support that conclusion. The report's emphasis on early mediation is critical. Every effort needs to be made to put an early stop to an emerging crisis before it can develop into conflict and humanitarian emergency which places further strain on already limited peacekeeping resources.

We therefore see it as an important and positive development that we are now seeing proper investment in United Nations mediation capacities. We welcome the General Assembly's decision to enhance the capacity in mediation of the Department of Political Affairs as part of strengthening its overall preventive diplomacy effort. With these new resources, we shall of course be looking for improved performance from

Mr. Pascoe's department and the United Nations as a whole. We welcome specifically the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit and the assistance it has provided the United Nations and other mediation efforts. We appreciate the need for flexible resources, including for the early startup of mediation activities.

But it is not just a question of resources. The report provides some useful principles for successful mediation. We need to ensure that every effort is made and every opportunity taken to improve the speed and effectiveness of mediation efforts. We need to ask a number of questions: Are the right mechanisms in place? Can we trigger the early launch of mediation efforts? Can we determine who is best placed to lead a mediation effort? And can we ensure that other actors support the person in the lead?

My colleagues have talked about the need for increased numbers of women to be involved in mediation. The statistics in the report about their under-representation are striking, and we need to work much harder to ensure the full involvement of women, and of civil society generally. This is particularly important for conflict situations that have been characterized by widespread sexual violence, and the United Kingdom looks forward to further discussion of this issue in the context of the Secretary-General's reports on peacebuilding and on women and peace and security.

Mediation cannot be conducted in a vacuum. Mediation capacity must be a core part of any institutional architecture to address conflict, and we need to ensure that the right links are made between mediators and those engaged in the planning and implementation of peace agreements.

In taking forward the report's recommendations, as Mr. Pascoe noted, the Secretariat will also need to take account of the conclusions of the forthcoming reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and early recovery, which we hope will be comprehensive and ambitious. They will also need to take account of the work being undertaken for a more rigorous and strategic approach to peacekeeping.

With that in mind, we support the overall effort and this debate, and we support the conclusions set out in the draft presidential statement.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate. It will serve as a useful follow-up to a related meeting organized by the delegation of Burkina Faso last September (see S/PV.5979). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189) and for his commitment to strengthening United Nations capacity to resolve conflicts peacefully. My delegation appreciates Under-Secretary-General Pascoe's comments today and congratulations him on the mediation efforts of the Department of Political Affairs.

Of all the principles in the United Nations Charter, the peaceful settlement of disputes is among the most powerful. We all know the human and material toll of armed conflict. When countries are looking for ways to resolve their differences without violence, the international community bears a responsibility to support them. We also know that United Nations mediation and good offices missions have played a crucial role in ending many conflicts during the past 20 years. From these experiences we have learned a great deal about how to make mediation effective and its results enduring.

For its part, the United States is steering a course that puts a new premium on energetic diplomacy to resolve some of the toughest issues we face. President Obama has spoken of a new era of engagement, and we are serious about listening to and speaking frankly with those with whom we have substantive differences. We have also named special envoys to lead our efforts to help resolve crises across the globe.

We welcome this debate today as an opportunity to look closely at ways in which the United Nations can better do its part to provide good offices and mediation. In this regard, we welcome the strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs, including the creation of its mediation support standby team, which can become one of the most effective tools of the United Nations for early response to crises.

We also need to recognize and build into our plans the reality that the need for mediation rarely ends with a peace agreement or on the day that the Security Council establishes a United Nations mission. Rather, we should work to ensure that mediation capabilities are built into United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

In his report, the Secretary-General has raised the issue of the pursuit of peace and justice. He rightly states that, when conflicts lead to gross violations of

human rights and international humanitarian law, peace and justice are indivisible.

Let me also offer a word on the role of women. The United States stands firmly committed to resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), which stress the need for the active involvement of women in efforts to promote peace and security. We support the call of those resolutions to give women a larger decision-making role in conflict resolution. Mediation efforts that exclude women's perspectives and deny them a seat at the table are likely to neglect issues that are vital to securing lasting peace. My Government also welcomes the Secretary-General's commitment to increase the number of women among the special representatives and envoys who pursue good offices on his behalf.

There are times when the United Nations will be in the best position to lead third-party efforts to support resolution of disputes. In some situations, other actors may be better suited, and we need to support the mediation capabilities of other institutions or members of the international community in this regard.

Regional organizations are particularly important actors in mediation, as we are reminded by Chapter VIII of the Charter. Regional bodies are often more familiar with issues in their regions and able to deploy resources more quickly. We encourage the United Nations to continue to partner with regional organizations and other actors to seek timely and successful resolution of conflicts. We also need to work to develop national and local mediation capacities, since disputes are often most productively resolved at that level.

Smart, principled and skilful mediation can reduce threats to peace and security, but all parties to the conflict must participate in good faith to achieve a truly lasting settlement. The Council has many tools at its disposal to deal with spoilers, and we need to work diligently to deploy them to greatest effect when they are needed to resolve crises and support peace processes.

The United States will continue to be an advocate of peaceful means of conflict resolution. We know that mediation is never easy, but we must work together to bring the conflicts and crises that trouble us all to a swift and durable resolution. My delegation also supports the statement prepared by the delegation of Burkina Faso and thanks them for that initiative.

Mr. Mugoya (Uganda): I wish to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate on the mediation and settlement of disputes. It is an important follow-up to the high-level meeting on mediation and settlement of disputes in September last year (*see S/PV.5979*) during the presidency of Burkina Faso, which reaffirmed the role of the United Nations in mediation efforts. Therefore I wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Pascoe, for presenting the Secretary-General's report on enhancing mediation and its support activities.

We commend the United Nations for the role it has played over the years in helping to mediate inter- and intra-State conflicts around the world. We have noted from the report the challenges that confront the United Nations and its partners in providing effective mediation assistance to parties in the various conflicts.

Uganda considers mediation to be an important aspect of dispute settlement efforts, one that can and should be used at different phases of the conflict. We see mediation as a broad process that supplements other processes of conflict management. But its effectiveness in dispute settlement requires an understanding of how mediation works, the factors that influence it and how best to utilize it.

It is regrettable that, despite its proven value in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, mediation has continued to receive remarkably little attention or support. We have heard that the ability of the United Nations to carry out mediation has been severely hampered by the lack of adequate, dedicated human and financial resources. The Secretary-General's report puts it very clear, saying that

> "efforts have been concentrated on the more costly tasks of dealing with the shattered remnants of devastated lives, communities and institutions of State, while the daunting challenge of reconstruction has absorbed resources that could have gone into early dispute resolution" (S/2009/189, para. 8).

It is therefore imperative that mediation efforts be properly resourced. Early mediation in a preventive context can, if successful, obviate the need for peacekeeping missions. More effective mediation at the peacekeeping stage could result in peace agreements that are more implementable. Robust mediation

capacity during implementation could lead to more rapid and efficient consolidation of peace.

Despite the remarkable efforts by the United Nations in mediation, as the Secretary-General rightly states in his report, the United Nations does not have a monopoly on mediation. Regional and subregional arrangements have played an important role over the years, as we have seen in Africa in particular. We welcome the efforts by the Secretary-General in working more closely with regional and subregional partners. We are convinced that a regional approach in which the challenges are dealt with in a focused and more coordinated way, such as in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, concerning Burundi, is very useful.

Experience has shown that for mediation to succeed it must be guided by a knowledgeable lead actor. There is no doubt that there should be careful consideration in identifying a suitable lead player in any mediation effort. The complexity of conflicts requires that mediators have a thorough understanding of local history, politics, cultures and personalities before assuming any substantive role. Furthermore, they should have the perseverance to work with the parties and the patience to refrain from rushing the process. An important lesson from recent mediation experiences is that at critical points it is necessary to have a mediator who can deal with the main protagonists at the top, to minimize the influence of entrenched and hard-line interests.

Furthermore, every effort should be made to avoid duplication of mediation efforts. Multiple leadership leads to fragmented responses, reinforcing fragmentation in the conflict, and complicates resolution of any dispute.

Mediators require support teams. We welcome the establishment of a Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs to support the mediation efforts of relevant United Nations departments and of the Organization's partners, such as regional and subregional organizations, as well as of Member States. We support the role of the Mediation Support Unit and call for a more sustainable funding arrangement to support its activities. We are convinced that this Unit will further enhance the partnership arrangements envisaged between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Early warning mechanisms are crucial in the prevention of conflict and mediation. However, the challenge is how to transform the information obtained into a viable response that, by facilitating mediation, can prevent escalation. An effective early warning network should be linked at the national, regional and global levels. This is where the resource-mobilization capacity of the United Nations is key in facilitating the establishment of an early warning system that provides vital input for mediation and early action mechanisms.

Finally, if properly utilized, mediation can do more than merely achieve a settlement of the conflict; it can also facilitate in the long run the full transformation of relations between and within States. In that regard the Security Council has an important role to play in support of mediation efforts. It is therefore our expectation that this debate will generate greater international support for the Secretary-General's efforts in mediation. We also thank the delegation of Burkina Faso for the draft presidential statement, which we fully support.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate and by thanking the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Pascoe, for introducing the Secretary-General's report, which focused our attention on one aspect of the Council's activity that, while frequently present in our discussions, has thus far received relatively little attention on its own merits.

Croatia believes this is a topic that deserves the attention of the Security Council, to be approached in a coherent and coordinated manner. We are grateful for the Secretary-General's report, which extensively examines the challenges facing the United Nations and its partners in providing mediation services in both inter- and intra-State conflicts at all stages of the conflict cycle.

While we align ourselves with the statement of the European Union to be delivered later, permit me to add some further remarks.

As the report notes, the peaceful settlement of disputes should be seen as one facet of the sovereign responsibility of States. Mediation has rightly been recognized as an efficient and strikingly cost-effective tool that the Security Council has at its disposal in addressing threats to international peace and security. As it is often political issues that lie at the heart of crises, the importance of early engagement in

preventive diplomacy — including mediation — is even more significant during this period, in which United Nations-mandated peacekeeping operations have experienced unprecedented demand and strain.

We should not forget that Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations offers an array of other tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes, namely negotiation, enquiry, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of the parties' choice. Since every dispute is different, a differentiated, flexible and tailor-made approach is preferable.

As a politically oriented tool, mediation has a strategic place in conflict prevention and resolution. However, that does not diminish the value of other instruments, which should be used judiciously, sometimes in combination with one another, and in a manner that respects the wider normative standards of the United Nations and promotes the international rule of law.

The report highlights a number of factors that determine the success of mediation, from deciding on the timing, selecting the right mediator and lead actor, defining the structure of the mediation and identifying all relevant interlocutors to issues of gender balance, managing the spoilers and monitoring the implementation of the negotiated outcome. All those factors need to be taken into account and, often, cultivated at the system-wide level.

Croatia supports the Secretary-General's recommendations aimed at capacity-building and addressing the inadequacies that have been identified regarding the ability of the United Nations to carry out mediation. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), in response to a growing demand for United Nations mediation services, should be the platform on which we are building in developing capacity at the national, regional and United Nations levels and in professionalizing mediation support.

When addressing the role of the Security Council in that context, we should focus on enhancing coordination and the strategic leadership of the Council, particularly in situations involving a multiplicity of actors and mediation issues. The Security Council has unique leverage derived from its international legitimacy and moral authority, which should be used prudently. The Council is often critically placed to respond during the decisive — and usually very short — window of opportunity before a dispute escalates into conflict. It is well placed to address failures in implementation and the problem of spoilers.

That being said, we should acknowledge that, while they are certainly well placed, neither the Council nor the United Nations has a monopoly on mediation. That is why coordination and complementarity of efforts are crucial, both at the system-wide level and in the context of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. Ultimately, the responsibility for the peaceful settlement of disputes lies with the parties. That is why building national and local capacity is crucial and should be adequately reflected in the mandates defined by the Security Council.

Finally, at all times, we should remain mindful of the fact that the very nature of mediation is such that it commands a degree of discretion and flexibility. A successful mediation process should be able to strike the right balance between public and quiet diplomacy.

We believe that the draft text of the presidential statement we are to adopt today reflects the main messages of this debate, and it has our support. In that respect, let me express our gratitude to the delegation of Burkina Faso for the efforts made in its preparation. We see efforts to enhance mediation and its support activities as part and parcel of the wider effort to strengthen the ability of the United Nations to play its role to the fullest extent in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, in an integrated and coherent manner.

Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like to thank Mr. Lynn Pascoe for having presented the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189). We are grateful to the Secretary-General for having submitted the report, whose main recommendations we support.

My delegation, which associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, is pleased to be able to participate in this debate, which continues the fruitful exchanges that took place in the Security Council on 23 September 2008 (see S/PV.5979) under the leadership of President Blaise Compaore. He presented Burkina Faso's views on the conditions

necessary for successful mediation, which must include resolving the deep-seated causes of conflict if we are to hope to produce lasting results.

In taking the initiative to organize a high-level Security Council meeting on this issue, my delegation intended, in addition to expressing the importance that Burkina Faso attaches to the quest for peaceful solutions to conflicts, to encourage experience-sharing in the specific area of mediation. That is why we are grateful to you, Mr. President, for having agreed to organize today's public debate, which enables all United Nations Member States to take part in these exchanges.

The obligation of States to resolve their disputes by peaceful means is stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. Among the techniques provided for in Article 33, mediation has proved to be one of the most effective, cost-effective and, what is more, fruitful in terms of peace and development. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189), which well describes the Organization's activities in that regard, offers still further proof that mediation has always been at the heart of United Nations activities.

We are all familiar with the Secretary-General's good-offices and mediation missions, whose number and scale have grown continuously in response to the increase in the number of conflicts and, in particular, to their increasing complexity. Thus, the question today is not whether that role is necessary or useful, but rather how to further build the capacities of the Secretariat, in particular the Mediation Support Unit, which is increasingly being called upon but which is equipped with limited resources.

As the principal organ entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has a natural role in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes, including through mediation, and in supporting all relevant and related initiatives. What better way to guarantee peace and security than to prevent conflicts, to prevent nascent hotspots of tension from turning into violent conflicts or, when conflicts erupt — regrettably and despite all efforts — to help contain and extinguish them as swiftly as possible, if not once and for all, at least for the long term?

In other words, just like crisis management, mediation poses the problem of prevention. Strengthening our prevention efforts by, inter alia, combating weapons proliferation and strengthening social cohesion and political and economic governance within States helps us to better anticipate crisis situations. A certain balance should therefore be established among the Council's functions — all the more so because the success of mediation initiatives offers one of the most complete and concrete responses to the issue of peacekeeping operations, which are increasingly costly. We thus call on the Security Council to explore ways and means to further strengthen its own role in that area, including with regard to the problem of sanctions.

One cannot stress enough the importance of the contributions of regional and subregional organizations, given their knowledge of the actors and the stakes involved in conflicts, as well as of the realities on the ground. It is essential that useful measures be taken to support their efforts and strengthen their capacities.

In Africa, the Constitutive Act of the African Union enshrines the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force. In line with those principles, the African Union has always been present from the very onset of crises affecting some member States, thus averting the deterioration of those crises into open and violent conflicts, or supporting the parties in resolving the crises. Burkina Faso welcomes the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations and hopes to see it strengthened in the future.

The Economic Community of West African States has institutionalized the practice of mediation through the setting up of a Mediation and Security Council and a Council of Elders in the framework of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.

Because States are and always will be at the front line of conflicts and efforts to resolve them, they must strengthen their mediation capacities. Convinced of the virtues of dialogue and cooperation, Burkina Faso has placed the promotion of mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes at the heart of its diplomacy, which has enabled it, through the decisive action of President Blaise Compaore, to accompany certain brotherly States on the path to peace and reconciliation on the basis of the philosophy of national ownership by actors, regional leadership and international support.

With respect to the number and diversity of mediators, my delegation deems it timely to stress the necessity of strengthening cooperation and coordination. The need for cooperation, coordination and consistent action speaks to the need to create joint databases, decentralize coordination centres and draft joint practices and approaches.

Finally, my country shares the concerns of the Secretary-General on the dearth of women mediators, as well as the low level of their involvement in technical mediation teams. My delegation reiterates Council's appeal to the Secretary-General, the heads of regional and subregional organizations and the heads of other organizations to take urgent steps to remedy that state of affairs.

In conclusion, my delegation thanks all delegations for their support of the draft presidential statement that we initiated and hope to see adopted at the end of our discussion.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189). I also wish to thank you, Sir, for having organized this debate in order to follow up on the initiative of Burkina Faso in organizing an initial discussion in the Security Council last September on the topic of the maintenance of international peace and security, mediation and the settlement of disputes.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. Mediation is an extremely important tool available to the international community for conflict prevention and management. It bears repeating that successful mediation has often interrupted or even averted tragedy, and public opinion tends too often to forget that fact.

From its inception, the United Nations has played a crucial role in that area and must continue to do so, as the Secretary-General has done by dispatching President Obasanjo to facilitate the dialogue between the heads of State of the Great Lakes region on the one hand, and between the Kivu armed groups and the Congolese Government, on the other. Mediation was also apparent in the case of Madagascar, where the Secretary-General began by sending Mr. Haile Menkerios and then appointed a special political adviser, Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, whose efforts to promote a return to constitutional order in that country should continue. There are, of course, many other examples, and I wish to reiterate France's support for the efforts of Mr. Vijay Nambiar in Sri Lanka. My delegation hopes that the Council will hear from him soon.

I wish to make one comment on the subject at hand. The idea of mediation makes perfect sense in the context of inter-State conflict or well-identified parties. A broadened range of threats to international peace and security — I refer in particular to terrorism, organized crime and other such examples — makes the exercise even more complex and fully warrants taking the time to discuss the matter within the Council.

In his report, the Secretary-General draws certain lessons that reveal the expertise required for successful mediation, as well as the organizational aspects that concern the Security Council first and foremost. In particular, my delegation is referring to the coordination and consistency of initiatives. The United Nations has the authority and legitimacy to address that issue, be it through mediation efforts or to support those undertaken by others in order best to ensure success.

From that point of view, there is a paradox in hearing certain States invoke non-interference when the Council could intervene before a crisis leads to violence, and thus before the situation calls for a more robust intervention on the part of the Council. We have seen that in recent years and again lately.

Another important lesson is the need to act quickly. That is crucial. The recommendations of the Secretary-General, which seek to improve the ability of the United Nations in supporting rapid intervention, are apt and should be supported. In particular, my delegation welcomes the establishment and strengthening of the Mediation Support Unit, which has already proven to be a useful instrument to support good offices missions and the mediation efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations.

Support for peace processes also involves targeted and resolute action against those who would threaten to derail those processes. Council action in that area must be flexible and reactive; I am thinking in particular of the inclusion in resolution 1844 (2008) on Somalia of provisions on individual sanctions against

"[entities] that threaten the peace, security or stability of Somalia, including acts that threaten the Djibouti Agreement" (*resolution 1844 (2008), para. 8 (a)*).

In conclusion, I wish to stress that the strategy for implementing peace agreements must be outlined early and be sufficiently inclusive. It is therefore crucial to include all of the stakeholders in the process, as much as possible. Here, the role of regional organizations must be emphasized, including the African Union, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, all mentioned by Mr. Pascoe. Those organizations have shown in the past their true ability to act in close coordination with the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, in order to promote political solutions that have averted tragedy. We must also not forget the important role played by civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, and women.

My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to strengthen the recruitment of women for mediation activities. Furthermore, the United Nations mediation and conflict prevention activities and capacities should be strengthened in coordination with the discussions under way on post-conflict action, peacebuilding and, of course, improved peacekeeping. Mediation, when it can implement true political process or cooperation, is also a means of reducing the burden of peacekeeping or of laying the foundation's for the deployment of an operation or of a peacebuilding and state-building strategy.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): First of all, I would like to thank you, Sir, for organizing an open debate on this important subject. I would also like to express gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189) and my appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his assessment on what has been learned from past experiences.

The peaceful settlement of disputes is a core function of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security. In accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter, the parties to any dispute and the Security Council are obliged to seek a solution through peaceful means such as negotiation and mediation. The Secretary-General also has a special role under the Charter in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Mediation should play a more important role in promoting peace in a cost-effective manner. That is especially true as the financial and human resources of conflict management and peace operations have grown to an unprecedented level. We need to place a higher priority and focus on mediation activities in the United Nations.

In the history of United Nations mediation, some cases — such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Namibia, Cambodia, Mozambique and many others — were more successful than other cases. From those experiences, we may point out that United Nations mediation is more effective when it is matched with joint efforts by the various stakeholders. The modality of mediation needs to be adapted to each circumstance. The level and type of United Nations engagement vary from playing a lead role in some places to supporting the efforts of other parties. It is important, however, to coordinate and ensure the coherence of mediation efforts by various actors. The United Nations should strengthen partnerships with lead countries, groups of stakeholders such as international contact groups, regional and subregional organizations and, in some cases, non-governmental actors.

United Nations mediation activity has a comparative advantage in terms of its legitimacy, impartiality and convening power. The United Nations should focus on the following areas, based on its rich experience and the diverse tools at its disposal, ranging from the provision of security to humanitarian and recovery assistance.

First, in terms of the provision of appropriate support to mediators, the United Nations needs to provide professional, technical, administrative and logistical support to all kinds of mediation efforts by different actors, including the United Nations itself, of course, but also regional and subregional organizations.

Secondly, in terms of the development of future mediators, the United Nations should help develop the next generation of mediators at all levels within and outside of the United Nations. We fully agree with the Secretary-General that the generation change now under way and qualified senior mediators and their experienced support teams are key to successful mediation. We support the serious efforts that are needed to train and build United Nations mediation capacities.

Thirdly, in terms of comprehensive engagement after peace agreements, the United Nations needs to provide comprehensive and integrated conflict resolution support by making full use of field offices and the United Nations funds and agencies throughout countries.

We are mindful that mediation is by no means a simple task, but we hope that the United Nations will continue to make the utmost effort to strengthen this activity. In particular, I would like to emphasize three key questions that the United Nations could address in pursuit of successful mediation in the coming weeks.

First, in order to lay a solid foundation for durable peace after a peace agreement is signed, we should examine in depth how social and economic stability aspects and peacebuilding aspects can be incorporated from the beginning of mediation and conflict resolution processes.

Secondly, in view of the centrality of the political process in post-conflict situations, it is essential to continue active mediation activity throughout the implementation of a peace agreement and the peace consolidation process. To this end, we need to clarify the role of United Nations field missions and representatives of the Secretary-General and their required conditions and capacities.

Thirdly and lastly, in situations of intra-State conflicts, the United Nations has been relatively successful. What will be an effective and realistic role for the United Nations in supporting mediation efforts involving non-State actors?

In conclusion, I would like to thank Burkina Faso for its initiative, and we would like to express our support for the presidential statement. I would also like to stress how important it is for the Secretary-General to pursue active mediation efforts and to keep the Council informed of his activities. We believe that it would be useful for the Council to conduct periodic reviews of the progress in this area.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): First, I wish to thank the presidency for convening this open debate on an issue of great importance to the United Nations and the Member States. Indeed, conflict prevention and crisis management through mediation are one of the founding principles of the United Nations, and we cannot overemphasize its significance to our work in the Council. We therefore welcome the opportunity to engage in such a comprehensive debate on this issue.

Secondly, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Mediation Support Unit for their diligent work in preparing the report before us today (S/2009/189). I also express my thanks to Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his concise presentation highlighting the important elements of the report and paving the way for an enlightened discussion today.

Last but not least, I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso for bringing this issue under closer scrutiny back in September last year, during its presidency of the Council.

The report before us today touches upon almost every single element pertaining to the importance of mediation and what needs to be done to further streamline our activities in this particular area. Therefore, I am not going to repeat those points one by one. Suffice it to say that successful mediation is by far the most efficient and cost-effective means for the peaceful settlement of disputes and that more time, effort and resources ought to be devoted to such endeavours.

In this regard, there is no doubt that the United Nations has a special role to play in leading these efforts. On most occasions, United Nations engagement in itself lends credibility and legitimacy to mediation processes. Moreover, the body of work developed by the United Nations in any particular conflict often provides the best starting point, as is the case with the situation in Cyprus. Thus, we need to do everything possible to further enhance the professional mediation capacity of this Organization. The Secretary-General's report contains useful recommendations to this end. As one of the leading contributors to the Mediation Support Unit, Turkey is committed to playing an active part in this exercise.

That said, in today's world of multifaceted challenges to peace and stability, which involve a great number of different actors and dynamics, the United Nations cannot always be expected to fulfil this role alone. Regional organizations, individual Member States and even non-governmental entities have important and at times leading contributions to make, depending on the particular features of the conflicts in question.

This is indeed a fact, and it is explicitly mentioned in the report. The challenge, however, is to find the right composition and combination of action so that the different players do not compete with each other, but rather complement and mutually strengthen their endeavours. For that, healthy coordination and cooperation among the interested actors is required at every step of the mediation process. It is within this frame of mind that I am looking forward to the Council's upcoming mission to Africa, where we will have our annual meeting with the African Union Peace and Security Council to discuss existing and possible future joint efforts.

Of course, this phenomenon is not confined to the African continent, and it must be seen as a guiding parameter for all mediation efforts around the world. In this regard, the United Nations, again, is in a crucial position to make its cooperation and coordination with other actors work effectively. Whether through the provision of professional operational support by the Secretariat or via the political endorsement and direction given by the Security Council, the United Nations can indeed make a positive difference to the quality, credibility and efficiency of overall mediation efforts. The groups of friends established within the United Nations framework can also be conducive to effective peacemaking, provided that they have the right membership.

As to the role of the Security Council in particular, the incentives and disincentives that the Council may provide at the different phases of the mediation processes can prove to be an indispensable enabler in convincing the parties to the conflict to settle their differences through peaceful means. That said, we agree with the Secretary-General that:

> "While disincentives have been widely studied and applied, positive incentives have not received much attention and further work to refine them is merited" (*S/2009/189, para. 29*).

In particular, we should be able to make further and more strategic use of the positive incentives available across the United Nations system through different United Nations agencies and funds.

The issue of mediation is particularly relevant to what Turkey tries to do in its region and beyond. Indeed, Turkey has lately been engaged in a number of mediation activities of its own, ranging from Afghanistan to the Caucasus and from the Balkans to the Middle East.

Based on this experience, we have learned that mediation is a complicated process involving multiple actors in a way that requires careful and calibrated steps undertaken with patience and commitment. We have also observed, that compared to intergovernmental organizations, State actors may in some cases have the advantage of flexibility and the ability to act quickly, quietly and discreetly, which can be instrumental to the success of a mediation effort. However, we have also seen that the support of the United Nations and the international community to the ongoing processes, as appropriate, can be crucial.

In conclusion, I am convinced that the issue of mediation and, in particular, the comparative advantages of different international actors for mediation merit further discussion in future thematic settings.

With that, I thank the Secretary-General once again for the guidance contained in his thought-provoking report and express our readiness to actively engage in future deliberations on this topic.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Putting aside for a few minutes my functions as President of the Council, I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Mexico.

I too thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe, for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General on mediation and settlement of disputes (S/2009/189). I would also like to acknowledge the efforts made by the delegation of Burkina Faso in promoting awareness with respect to this very important item on our agenda.

The large number of delegations taking part in this open debate reflects the importance of mediation for international peace and security. It also reflects the great interest that we all share in the peaceful settlement of disputes and the need to complement our efforts, from within our own individual contexts, to strengthen the Organization's role in mediation and conflict prevention. Mexico is committed to promoting compliance with those recommendations that are relevant to the work of the Security Council as well as to the fostering commitments that will be adopted after this debate.

The introduction of the report of the Secretary-General gives us an opportunity to discuss and propose strategies for the settlement of disputes through mediation.

Traditionally, the Organization has always sought to resolve crises reactively once they have already broken out, diminishing its capacity for immediate action and its preventive role. From several points of view, we must insist today on the great advantages offered by United Nations prevention activities.

The cost of peace will always be less than that of war. Several United Nations reports on conflict prevention point out that the international community spent roughly $200 billion in the seven largest operations of the 1990s: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia and El Salvador. These reports also calculate that by taking a preventive approach the United Nations would have saved the international community almost $130 billion, not even thinking about the number of victims of all of these conflicts.

Other studies have shown that over the past 15 years so-called military victories have only resolved less than 8 per cent of conflicts, while negotiations have prevailed in the remaining 92 per cent of the cases.

Mexico has always spoken out in favour of the peaceful settlement of disputes and remains convinced that the true strengthening of the Organization's role in the world depends largely on enhancing the application of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Throughout its history, my country has been one of its most active promoters, resorting to international tribunals and arbitration and intensively promoting peaceful dispute settlement through mediation in our region.

Mediation basically refers to peacebuilding and creative and coordinated participation in peace processes with a view to forging agreements and generating political and social stability through negotiation and the fostering of dialogue, beyond scenarios of social and political crisis.

We firmly believe that, to a large extent and thanks to mediation, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean has for several decades been one of the most peaceful regions on the planet. Mediation has favoured the settlement of political, ideological and territorial conflicts and border disputes.

In 1983, the Contadora Group led mediation efforts to restore and maintain peace and security in Central America. Together with Colombia, Panama and Venezuela, Mexico established a mediation mechanism to achieve the easing of tension, political understanding and cooperation in Central America. The consensus achieved through this group is a clear example that in a changing reality political dialogue must be an essential tool for understanding between States. Contadora laid the foundations for peace in Central America, which are enshrined in the Esquipulas Agreements undertaken by the States involved in the region.

In the case of El Salvador, Mexico's participation with the so-called Group of Four facilitated peace efforts that afterwards made it possible to achieve the signing of peace agreements in Chapultepec, Mexico, in 1992. On that occasion, Colombia, Spain, Venezuela and Mexico made up the so-called Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, which offered ongoing support to the negotiation efforts of the United Nations. In that context, the Organization took part as an intermediary and subsequently was in charge of verifying the solution of a non-international armed conflict. This negotiating process stood out not only for its success in peacemaking but also for its innovative character and for the precedent set at the international level.

Similarly, the Group of Friends of Guatemala contributed to the restoration of constitutional and democratic order in that country.

These episodes in Latin American diplomacy not only provide the region of Latin America and the Caribbean with broad experience in the area of mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes, but have also laid the basis for the establishment of mechanisms for consultation and political dialogue, which are important assets in tackling threats to peace and security in the region.

We should point out that the Contadora Group and the Contadora Support Group gave rise to the Rio Group, whose work has been recognized, for example, in the recent crisis between Ecuador and Colombia in 2008. The work of the Rio Group was decisive in preserving peace and taking the lead towards a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The vocation of the Latin American and Caribbean region is in favour of the peaceful settlement of disputes. The settlement of conflicts such as those of the Beagle Channel between Argentina and Chile and the border between Ecuador and Peru, as well as the referral of a number of territorial disputes and border demarcation to the International Court of Justice are all clear examples of our vocation.

As Article 33 of the Charter points out, the parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by traditional peaceful means.

The Security Council must provide ample opportunity for ongoing reconciliation procedures before calling for action on the basis of Articles 40 and 41 of the Charter. It is precisely in accordance with Article 33 that there is an obligation for all parties to a dispute to seek to resolve them through conventional means. Obviously, mediation must be consensual and the ideal of obligations comes up once the actors or parties to a conflict have agreed to resort to it. However, both mediation and other peaceful means to settle disputes must be exhausted before we resort to actions provided for under Chapter VII.

In our efforts to strengthen mediation activities, we must acknowledge that due to the diversity and complexity of current conflicts, those activities must be adapted to and control the specific context in which they are to operate. Even though the United Nations must play an important role in supporting mediation processes, it does not have a monopoly on these processes. Rather, we must acknowledge the effectiveness that can be shown by diverse players, such as the States concerned, regional and subregional bodies and humanitarian, civilian and other organizations, and we must support their work on the basis of the characteristics of the dispute or conflict. Examples of this approach can be seen in recent cases, such as those of Zimbabwe and Kenya and in resolution 1860 (2009) itself, adopted by the Council last January.

Mexico believes that the Security Council has the dual challenge of urging States to settle their disputes peacefully and also to offer all the support necessary to strengthen and contribute to mediation exercises that are under way. For his part, the Secretary-General must continue to play an important role in preventing conflicts that endanger international peace and security, offering his good offices to the parties in conflict. We applaud the good offices of the Secretary-General and welcome the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs.

In my delegation's opinion, the Security Council must be periodically informed on the progress that the Organization is making in that area. In that regard, my delegation believes that it is useful for the Secretary-General to present timely and detailed information on the mediation processes coordinated by the United Nations.

I thus conclude my statement as the representative of Mexico, and I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

We shall now turn to the list of speakers under rule 37. I first to give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased, Sir, to see you presiding over the Security Council this month with your usual efficiency.

(*spoke in English*)

I thank you, Mr. President, for holding an open debate on mediation and settlement of disputes, which is rather appropriate and timely. After all, it seems that we are entering a new era, in which renewed efforts are being made to settle disputes by peaceful means rather than by military intervention. This debate reminds us of a fundamental role of the United Nations that has not received the attention and support needed. The debate is also consistent with the current emphasis on strengthening preventive diplomacy at the United Nations.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and stimulating report (S/2009/189) and Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his briefing.

There seems to be widespread agreement on the merits of mediation and other means of pacific settlement of disputes referred to in Article 33 of the Charter. There is equally general support for making broader use of mediation and for a strong role for the United Nations in such a domain. That was made clear at the 2005 World Summit. Our leaders emphasized the existing obligation to settle disputes by peaceful

means, in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter and with the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. They also recognized the important role of the good offices of the Secretary-General, including in the mediation of disputes, and the need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity in that area.

Based on such solid political consensus, Member States need to address a number of conceptual, political and practical aspects related to mediation, such as those addressed by the Secretary-General in his report. I wish to share my delegation's perspectives on a few of them.

Mediation can be a powerful tool to help reach a solution in various stages of a dispute, but we believe the sooner it is used, the better. An effective mediation process can assist opponents to reach a settlement before the dispute turns into an armed conflict. Once violence flares, making peace becomes more challenging and human costs start rising, often dramatically.

Early mediation will be easier to provide if the United Nations and other actors develop and keep the expertise needed for immediate and/or rapid use. In that regard, we welcome the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs and its recent strengthening through the addition of seven posts. Likewise, we support efforts to help regional organizations to reinforce their own mechanisms for dispute settlement, as well as to assist national and local institutions in that respect.

Such cooperation is crucial, since actors other than the United Nations can be very effective as mediators and in some cases may stand higher chances of success. Recent examples of successful regional or subregional mediation come to mind. In the Americas, the Organization of American States was able to assist Colombia and Ecuador, and in Africa the Southern African Development Community was key to bringing about national unity in Zimbabwe. Even in cases where others are better placed to mediate a dispute, the Organization should still be ready to provide support, both political and technical, to those taking the lead, if needed.

The Security Council makes good use of mediation when, for instance, it decides on the mandate of some peacekeeping operations, but it could resort more frequently and decisively to the peaceful settlement of disputes. We know that the Council's firm support to mediators strengthens their position and encourages parties to seriously engage in negotiations. Other measures could be explored.

Apart from assisting in the settlement of specific disputes, further recourse to Chapter VI contributes to the long-term sustainability of action under Chapter VII. Early efforts to peacefully resolve disputes reduce threats to peace and security and therefore help to maintain the demand for peacekeeping operations at levels that the United Nations and Member States can manage adequately. From that perspective, greater use of mediation can be a part of the Council's overall response to the increased magnitude and complexity of peacekeeping.

Therefore, my delegation agrees with the recommendations submitted by the Secretary-General. We attach particular importance to strengthening conflict prevention and resolution through early engagement, developing close partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and promoting national and local capacity in conflict prevention and resolution.

In conclusion, I wish to stress my delegation's continued interest in this debate. We are also willing to explore how to further integrate innovative means of peaceful settlement of disputes into the agenda of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Normandin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like, Sir, to thank you and the Mexican delegation for organizing this important meeting.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189) and the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Pascoe. The report is a very useful document to understand mediation as a key instrument for the maintenance of peace and security. As the Secretary-General said, very little attention and few resources are devoted to mediation. That is all the more surprising, since that approach is very relevant and promising as well as cost-effective when seeking a solution to a conflict.

Last January, at the Security Council's open debate on peacekeeping operations (*see S/PV. 6075*), Canada stated that, following the Brahimi report, special attention should be paid to some existing or new challenges that the United Nations needed to meet in the field of peacekeeping. In particular, Canada underlined the importance of harnessing the preventive capacity of the United Nations, as prevention remains a fundamental and joint responsibility of the United Nations, its senior officers and the Member States. The unique legitimacy of the United Nations in the field of mediation and conflict resolution is widely acknowledged. However, beyond the Secretariat's good offices, it is important to recall that Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter also bestows on this Council the general responsibility to engage in prevention activities.

Canada also stressed the importance of the political dimensions of peace operations. Increasingly, conflicts are not fully resolved when a peace operation is deployed, and the regional dimensions or the partial respect for peace agreements complicate a large number of operations. In such cases, the political dimensions of peace operations become vital.

Yet, it must be acknowledged that those political dimensions are not well integrated within peacekeeping structures. Continued mediation efforts before, during and after the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, whether or not there is a comprehensive peace agreement, are paramount to the success of United Nations efforts to re-establish peace and security.

The Secretary-General's report makes excellent recommendations. I should like to speak in particular about four of these.

First, Canada unreservedly supports the need to build on the progress of the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) within the Department of Political Affairs. Canada has provided funding to the MSU to develop its roster of external experts for rapid deployment. Canada's contribution to that project will be supplemented by a list of Canadian mediation experts.

Secondly, the imbalance between the number of men and women in senior mediation posts should be corrected. To date, there have been no women among chief mediators, and very few in formal mediation roles of any kind. Canada applauds the Secretary-General's expressed intentions in that regard and requests that concerted efforts be made across the United Nations system to turn that commitment into results.

Thirdly, mediation efforts require dedicated expertise to ensure that appropriate and inclusive approaches are applied to all sectors. The nature of conflict is changing, and our response must adapt accordingly. Increasingly, sexual violence is used as a tactic of warfare; ceasefire and other mediated agreements must acknowledge and address that issue. Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) provide essential guidance on these matters for mediators.

Fourthly, the Secretary-General mentions the importance of strengthening regional mediation capacities. Canada fully supports the recommendation to ensure closer partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. Let me also add to the list the important contribution made by the International Organization of la Francophonie, inter alia, in Chad and the Central African Republic.

(*spoke in English*)

With respect to the Americas, Canada is developing a partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS) to deploy Canadian mediation support expertise within the OAS Department of Democratic Sustainability and Special Missions. Let me also note that Canada continues to assist in the effective implementation of the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation agreements to encourage the ongoing political dialogue between the coalition partners through the mediation assistance of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities.

Successful mediation efforts demand synergies among the various departments, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations. As different aspects of peace agreements are addressed, the work of mediation experts and various United Nations representatives from other fields can be mutually reinforcing.

Let me note that Canada is currently undergoing an internal policy exercise to consider past engagement in mediation processes and to examine options for enhancing Canada's contribution to the prevention and resolution of conflicts through mediation in the future. As we begin to see the appearance of new trends in mediation — including the next generation of mediators, such as non-governmental organizations — the Security Council's work on the maintenance of

peace and security is going to be affected and it must be agile and responsive to these changing circumstances.

In conclusion, let me say that Canada looks forward to engaging with the United Nations in this area and to supporting the work of the Security Council in particular.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate, and the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189) on enhancing mediation and its support activities, submitted pursuant to the presidential statement of 23 September 2008 (S/PRST/2008/36), adopted under the presidency of Burkina Faso. We pay tribute to the report's objectivity with respect to the importance of mediation as a means of preventing armed conflicts or of settling them in their early stages, before they escalate into armed conflicts threatening international peace and security. That is why this issue must be addressed at the international level through the Security Council.

I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for presenting the Secretary-General's report, and to associate myself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Despite the Secretary-General's intensive efforts to enhance the United Nations capacity to assume its mediation responsibilities, the implementation of the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1) as an informal framework for promoting peaceful settlement has yet to rise to the level of arbitration among parties. However, the report perpetuates the confusion between mediation activities aimed at preventing conflicts through preventive diplomacy, such as good offices and the facilitation of dialogue and mediation, and the settlement of disputes and post-conflict peacebuilding activities.

It is also important to identify the range of mediation tasks that the United Nations can undertake while maintaining clear objectives and a time frame focused on the phase when a dispute among States or within a State is still at the stage of a difference of opinions. Such tasks must be undertaken before a crisis, if not settled, escalates into an international or internal conflict that threatens international peace and security and upon the request or the direct approval of the State or States concerned.

From this perspective, the United Nations and the Security Council in particular have a major responsibility in enhancing the trust of Member States in their capacity to mediate in an objective, transparent and neutral manner. That responsibility should be assumed in a way that provides the United Nations with an exceptional role in this field and in cooperation and coordination with regional and subregional organizations and arrangements. That role should directly influence the sovereign decisions of States, upon their request and approval, through arguments and negotiations demonstrating that the parties' interests can be served through such efforts. Those efforts must be made in accordance with the principles of national ownership and in respect for the relevant provisions of the Charter on sovereignty and regional security.

This can be achieved not only through the restructuring of the Department of Political Affairs, the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit and the strengthening of its capacity to assume the role for which it was created, but also by enhancing international conviction that the Secretary-General and his seniors assistants, who play the role of mediators, are starting with a neutral perspective, accurate information and realistic approaches. They should take into account all aspects relating to the cultural, political, religious, ethnic and other causes of international conflicts, independent of the views and visions of the Security Council members, in addressing situations in their early stages. Their work should also be based on the enhanced independence of the Secretary-General and his representatives as they assume their exceptional roles free of all influence.

We in the African Union have accumulated mature experience in the field of mediation through the Panel of Eminent African Personalities. The Panel comprises a number of former leaders known for their wisdom, impartiality and justice. It meets periodically to follow up on developments in various African countries in a manner that allows for an incremental accumulation of information on disputes that might arise at different stages, and takes advantage of the trust that African leaders place in these eminent personalities. This trust has been built over the course of years and is founded on the record of achievements

of every one of its members in their country of origin. The Panel is also founded on its diversity, representing all African subregions, on the full independence and absolute impartiality of its members, and on their awareness of regional developments.

Without doubt, the ability of the United Nations to mediate between nations is directly linked to its ability — particularly that of the Security Council — to deal effectively with conflicts when they arise. It is not enough for the United Nations to manage crises without making any real effort to settle disputes. That has led to the increase of peacekeeping operations to their current level, which endangers the chances of dispatching additional such missions in the near future. In this regard, Egypt believes that there is an organic link between deploying peacekeeping missions and attaining peace agreements. We therefore agree with the Secretary-General observation in his report on the work of the organization at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly: that peacekeeping requires that there be a peace to keep. Accordingly, all parties should consider the role of the United Nations in addressing issues of concern at an early stage, before these issues evolve into conflicts that require intervention by the Security Council or the dispatch of a peacekeeping operation.

From that perspective, Egypt emphasizes the critical importance of strengthening the organic link between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council and of deepening cooperation between those two organs in the field of mediation. The successes of the two organs can be enhanced by strengthening coordination in these activities between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the African Union Commissioner. From the same perspective, we stress the centrality of enhancing the joint mediation efforts of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on the one hand and the Organization of the Islamic Conference on the other, in order to address issues involving Member States in the same manner in which the international community has recently been dealing with the case of Darfur.

The report's consideration of lessons learned highlights the importance of preventing the repeated failure of mediation processes in a manner that could negatively affect efforts to reach a settlement. It also stresses the importance of coordination among various United Nations bodies, with due regard for gender balance in the appointment of mediators; of appointing appropriate trustworthy personnel to assume mediation roles; and of ensuring respect for the rules of international law in dealing with serious crimes, especially with respect to the scope of application of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

We accept most of the recommendation set out in the report, but Egypt observes with increasing concern the Secretary-General's attempt to finance all the mediation and mediation support activities through voluntary contributions, even though this could affect the neutrality of these efforts and lead to their failure. Egypt believes that mediation processes have to be financed through formal contributions to the United Nations budget and that such processes should be listed in the Organization's budget among the special political missions. In this regard, we have previously suggested the establishment of a special account in order to avoid calculating such activities as extras in the budget. We will continue to support this proposal with a view to its adoption by the General Assembly, which is the principal organ originally mandated to deal with budgetary issues.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for organizing this open debate and giving non-members of the Council the opportunity to state their views on today's important and timely topic. I am most grateful too to Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his briefing, and in particular for the illustrative examples he provided.

My statement will address three points: the concept and significance of mediation; examples of our cooperation with the United Nations; and some major challenges.

The concept of mediation has changed significantly over the past 20 years. From being seen as an art mainly practiced by elder statesmen, mediation is now increasingly viewed as a profession demanding highly specialized personnel. In fact, mediation is a complex undertaking involving numerous actors. It is best conducted by integrated teams of mediation experts of different levels and with diverse backgrounds. Experience shows that mediation is an effective instrument to resolve conflict. It increases the probability of reaching an agreement and of long-term

reduction of tensions. Research suggests that since 2000, 17 conflicts were ended by the negotiation of a peace agreement, whereas four ended by the military success of one side.

To be sure, the effectiveness of mediation depends on many different factors. Active Security Council engagement can play an important role in strengthening and supporting mediation activities. We therefore welcome the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189), and we welcome today's debate. The report is a timely, adequate and useful contribution to further discussions in the Council. At the same time, it is true as well that mediation efforts need support beyond the Security Council. The Council bears an important responsibility of striking the proper balance between providing support and maintaining the autonomy of negotiators. It must also pool its own efforts with those of stakeholders outside the Council who are able and willing to make contributions. Finally, it must adapt outside contributions to the needs of local and regional actors. Rightly, the report touches upon some of these issues.

Switzerland commends the Secretary-General's approach to mediation, as described in his report, and supports United Nations activities based on this concept in many ways. Let me mention two examples. Swiss mediation specialists have been deployed to United Nations mediation processes, as in the case of the former head of the group of legal experts for the Cyprus peace process. In other cases, these mediators have worked closely with the United Nations. In Sudan for instance, we are cooperating with the joint African Union-United Nations mediation team for Darfur by providing assistance and training for various parties to the conflict. In Nepal, Swiss experts have been working in close cooperation with the United Nations in facilitating dialogue between the parties.

Switzerland has also supported the Mediation Support Unit, financially and through training and conceptual knowledge on best practices, including guidance notes on federalism and mediation in peace processes and on dealing with the past and mediation in peace processes.

The Secretary-General's report addresses many important issues that reflect in some ways our own national experience. Let me give three examples.

First, to be successful, mediation has to address the root causes of a conflict and requires a thorough understanding of the local situation and its cultural, political and ethnic dimensions. In this regard, close cooperation with local mediators and civil society is important. Such cooperation also strengthens local ownership of the process.

Secondly, implementation of the provisions of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women and peace and security remains a major challenge. We therefore strongly support the commitment of the Secretary-General to increase the proportion of women included in mediation teams and in particular to strengthen the gender-related expertise of senior mediators and their teams.

Thirdly, meaningful mediation has to involve all parties involved. This can lead to the dilemma of how to address both the imperatives of justice and those of peace. The standards and guidelines that have been formulated in this area are a good example of how mediation has been professionalized. However, there still is need for better cooperation among all actors involved if we want to be able to implement these standards.

In conclusion, let me stress how important it is for the Council to develop a collective vision of its role in international mediation efforts, taking into account the synergies and linkages among mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It is also very important for the Council to continue the dialogue with non-members on this topic. We consider the report of the Secretary-General and today's meeting to be important first steps.

With respect to the follow-up, it will be necessary to formulate more specifically the ideas contained in the report and further develop the general framework that the Secretary-General has proposed today.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Mr. President, at the outset I wish to thank you for convening this important debate. I am sure that this meeting, under your able guidance, will be very fruitful.

Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

I also would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his skilfully crafted report on enhancing mediation and its support activities.

The modern world is going to face new challenges. There are some prognoses that predict a number of possible future drivers of conflicts, such as severe economic and social problems, oil, some strategic minerals and climate change and, in that connection, the depletion of resources.

We have learned from modern history that the vast majority of conflicts cannot be solved by the use of force. There is no need to mention that war takes a nation's valuable economic and financial resources and its most precious resource: human lives. My intention is not to stress that armed conflicts are expensive but rather that they are meaningless. At the end, all parties involved in a conflict arrive, by themselves or through other players in international relations, at a solution by which to end the conflict. My statement concludes that the peaceful settlement of disputes through mediation is and will be an indispensable tool in resolving contemporary and possible future conflicts.

Theoretically speaking, mediation as a method of peaceful settlement of disputes can be traced to the ancient world. This proactive method means that the mediator is active and takes part in negotiations, suggesting terms of settlement to the parties, and sets preliminary arrangements based on areas in which the parties can agree. Also, a mediator has to enjoy the confidence of the parties to a dispute and must be impartial. This definition provides basic elements of the notion of mediation, which is a truly sensitive and very delicate matter. But when this method comes to life with its complexity, many questions arise and have to be answered.

In that regard the report of Secretary-General, with its sophisticated methodology and precise analysis, is a real masterpiece in this matter. It should be included in the literature for any future mediators, and publishing it in a handbook edition should be considered.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has its own painful experience. Unfortunately, Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced mediation in all three stages of conflict. It is unnecessary to say that mediation at the first stage, when the conflict still had not escalated into armed conflict, failed. Because of our "street smart" experience, my delegation would like to underline some points from the report.

First, disputes should be resolved at an early stage, before they turn into violent conflict, and the process should be as inclusive as possible. The United Nations, with all its capacity, should be engaged in the process as soon as possible. Every avenue — I repeat, every — must be explored to persuade actors to engage in negotiations at a very early stage of conflict.

Secondly, the mediator should possess good listening and problem-solving skills and should be supported by a highly skilled professional team. In that regard, women should be appropriately represented at decision-making levels.

Thirdly, leverage in mediation is very useful tool, but it must be used delicately or it can cause resistance. It this connection, managing spoilers is crucial, especially if powerful international actors are in play to control them. Sometimes it is very useful when some neighbouring countries or regional powers that are in close relationship with actors exert pressure on them in order to persuade them to sit at the table.

Fourthly, the United Nations should continue to build closer partnerships with regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations in mediation capacity-building. Acting in synergy, all those organizations may be considerably helpful in the field of conflict prevention.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs and supports the recommendation by Secretary-General that the United Nations develop the next generation of mediators who will have the skills to manage any future challenges.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that only strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to prevent conflict in its every phase — the first stage, before it escalates into armed conflict; the second stage, after the outbreak of violence; and the third stage, the implementation of peace agreements — can guarantee that the future world will be a much safer and better place to live.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on

your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April and to thank you for organizing this meeting devoted to mediation and settlement of disputes, in extension of the timely initiative of the delegation of Burkina Faso during its Council presidency in September 2008. The choice of this topic demonstrates yet again the continuity and steadfastness of the commitment of Mexico in the service of peace and security throughout the world.

I also wish to convey my gratitude to Mr. Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing.

Today's debate, the framework for which has been provided by the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities, provides an opportunity to underscore our support for the United Nations role in finding solutions to problems through negotiation.

The peaceful settlement of disputes, in addition to being a guiding principle in international relations, is a common objective at the very heart of our Organization's activity. The promotion of this type of dispute settlement, excluding the use of force, is a fundamental principle in Article 2 of the Charter, and all of Chapter VI is devoted to it. Mediation, which is part of peaceful settlement, is rightly considered to be the most cost-effective and efficient way to find constructive solutions to disputes.

Since its creation the United Nations has, through the good offices and mediation of its Secretaries-General and of eminent personalities, undertaken significant efforts to peacefully resolve conflicts in the world, and its actions have often been crowned with success. However, sometimes those actions were considered failures because of a lack of a good understanding of the dynamic of conflicts and of the stakes involved, which in hindsight masked a lack of preparation or an imperfect command of the use of time, if not an intentional lack of will to uphold the authority of the United Nations and the Charter principles.

To mitigate those shortcomings, the proposal of the Secretary-General to create, as part of the comprehensive restructuring of the Organization, a Mediation Support Unit composed of a pool of well-trained experts has been welcomed by all Member States. From our point of view, it is the institutional anchor for an activity that we need to support by promoting improvement of the quality of operational support to mediators, a good connection of United Nations interventions with regional and subregional pillars and, finally, greater involvement of the Security Council and its support for the mandate entrusted to mediators.

Experience has shown that to be genuinely effective, mediation, far from falling within the exclusive remit of the United Nations, benefits from association with a multiplicity of actors pooling their efforts and whose skills are brought to bear at different stages of the process, according to their specific contribution and taking account of the comparative advantage that their actions represent, in terms of both political and material costs.

Moreover, we are of the view that improving the method of financing special political missions will make it possible to identify ways to optimize the use of the Organization's resources over the medium and long terms.

Africa has long cultivated a tradition of negotiation and dialogue to resolve disputes by peaceful means. That culture of dialogue already existed when the Organization of African Unity was established in 1963, through the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration. Its activities were intended to facilitate the goal of continental development, which at the time was constantly being hampered by the proliferation of conflicts.

With its transformation into the African Union in 2002, its member States undertook the substantive renewal of a number of its organs, taking care to include in its new institutional architecture a similar conflict management and resolution mechanism, based on a Panel of the Wise responsible for supporting its efforts in order to prevent the eruption of conflicts and to create favourable conditions for conflict management and resolution. That mechanism, which was a first on both the African international scenes, has not only enabled African countries to give concrete content to the culture of peace — which represents a strong aspiration of all African peoples — but, also, and in particular, has given Africa the opportunity to capitalize on considerable experience in its quest for lasting solutions to conflicts.

At a time when we are witnessing an unprecedented increase in the number and scale of United Nations peacekeeping operations, which have

revealed the objective limits of the Organization's capacity to meet these needs, it is becoming imperative to make the too-long-awaited change of moving the Organization from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. The international community as a whole and the Security Council in particular must now commit themselves to a resolute approach aimed at supporting, consolidating and broadening the momentum launched on the African continent by the African Union, from which the United Nations will only stand to benefit.

Finally, I should like to stress that Algeria, which has always advocated the peaceful settlement of disputes, has often been called upon to mediate in situations as varied as the 1974 territorial dispute between Iran and Iraq, in which conflict was avoided; the 1979 hostage crisis between the United States and Iran; the civil war in Lebanon, leading to the conclusion of the Taif Accords; the open conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which ended with the 2000 Algiers Agreement; and the ongoing efforts regarding issues of a sensitive and internal nature in the immediate regional environment on its southern border. From those situations, we have learned that any successful mediation effort must be carried out with respect for Charter principles and depends on the unequivocal political will of the parties to a dispute, the mediator's deep sensitivity to the environment and, above all, the parties' confidence in the mediator.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council on behalf of Mexico for the month of April, at a time when the Council is considering the issue of mediation in the light of the clear and comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189), presented today by Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe.

The enshrining in the Charter of the United Nations of the customary principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes gave legitimacy to mediation as the preferred and effective means to resolve disputes and conflicts. Since then, mediation has proved its effectiveness and usefulness in many situations in the quest for solutions to crises. It is becoming increasingly important in a world torn by the proliferation of various kinds of conflicts and by the fragility of post-conflict situations. Here, we can only be pleased that various forms of mediation are tending to take on a preventive character and to cover post-conflict situations.

In the practice of mediation, it has been amply demonstrated that the success of any such effort continues to depend on the commitment of the parties to cooperate positively with the mediator's efforts. The success of such an undertaking involves a certain number of principles: first, the consent of the parties to resort to the mediator's services; secondly, the genuine — and not just apparent — political will of the parties to commit themselves to the settlement process, and their adoption of positions that support, rather than obstruct, a settlement; and thirdly, the objectivity and impartiality of the mediator in his understanding of the dispute and his commitment to safeguarding and consolidating the gains achieved. That requires, above all, knowledge about the history of the situation, awareness of its realities and an ability to maintain an ongoing, substantive, realistic and future-oriented dialogue with the parties to the dispute.

As mediation is simply a catalyst and a modus operandi designed to influence the conduct of the parties and to bring their points of view closer together, the difficulty, as the Secretary-General indicates in his report, lies in transforming "this adversarial process into one of problem-solving", in nudging "reluctant parties towards accommodation" and in "moving away from entrenched positions to explore innovative options" (*S/2009/189, para. 25*).

On their own with the mediators, the parties cannot make progress without the support of the Security Council, the efforts of the Secretary-General and the encouragement of Member States. Indeed, the role that the Council can play in the area of mediation is essential and has a positive and immediate impact on the conflict. Through its support for the good-offices efforts of the Secretary-General and his envoys and representatives, the Council promotes mediation and provides ample opportunities for conflict settlement through peaceful means, over and above any other alternative.

At the same time, and by virtue of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council can use its authority vis-à-vis the parties to a conflict in order to maximize the gains and advantages offered by mediation and can

encourage the parties to adopt a constructive attitude to United Nations efforts and to consider the impact on the region's peoples and on the objective of international peace and security.

The Secretary-General, for his part, plays a valuable complementary role and enjoys prestige that enables him to intervene effectively to overcome an impasse in or re-launch the settlement of a dispute or conflict. That role should be politically and materially supported, including through assistance for the Mediation Support Unit, the establishment of a database of potential candidates for mediation, facilitation and negotiation and, finally, the promotion of training in the area of mediation.

Furthermore, while the observation made in the Secretary-General's report about the role played by States in conflict reduction and resolution applies to Security Council member States and other influential States, it applies equally — if not more — to the States that are neighbours to the zone of conflict or dispute. Indeed, the emphasis placed in the report on the imperative need to understand conflicts in their regional or subregional context underscores that fact, which requires States in the region to conduct themselves in a positive manner with regard to settling the dispute or conflict.

However, the results of mediation, when it succeeds, can be incomplete or can easily be reversed if peacebuilding efforts do not follow — if the international community disengages itself from the conflict and does not help the parties to strengthen the rule of law and democracy, to re-launch their economies and to better manage the post-conflict phase.

In its thinking and in its actions, Morocco has always favoured the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts. It has always been committed to fostering dialogue and bringing together points of view in different regions of the world, in particular in the Middle East and in Africa, including in the Mano River region. My country's commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes strengthened its early commitment to the United Nations in peacekeeping operations, a commitment which continues and is growing stronger.

Finally, Morocco is ready to associate itself with the efforts of the United Nations and to support it in its quest to acquire a mediation support structure that would be efficient and effective within the framework of strengthening United Nations-preventive diplomacy.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are still some 20 speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6108 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6108th meeting

Tuesday, 21 April 2009, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Lutterotti
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Dai Demao
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Ms. Čačić
	France	Mr. Fieschi
	Japan	Mr. Ishikawa
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Turkey	Mr. Gümrükçü
	Uganda	Mr. Ociti
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Green
	United States of America	Mr. McBride
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and settlement of disputes

Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

09-30856 (E)

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The meeting resumed at 3.15 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Sudan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): We wish to express our appreciation to the presidency of the Security Council for organizing this important debate on the maintenance of international peace and security: mediation and settlement of disputes. We also wish to recognize the role played by Burkina Faso, whose initiative last year culminated in the report of the Secretary-General before us (S/2009/189).

In its Article 2, paragraph 3, the United Nations Charter requires Member States to "settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered". Article 33 of the Charter requires Member States to seek a solution by peaceful means to any dispute that they might be party to.

In this regard, the United Nations has, over the years, played a useful role in helping to mediate inter- and intra-State conflicts before they escalate into armed conflicts, after the outbreak of violence and during the implementation of peace agreements. However, peaceful resolution of disputes is a sovereign responsibility, and, therefore, building effective local and national capacity should be a priority within States.

Similarly, the African Union (AU) continues to play a meaningful and active role towards the peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration, within its limited resources and capabilities. The active role that the African Union has played and continues to play in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa should be seen as complementing the efforts of the United Nations. The establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture, including the Early Warning System, the Pan-African Parliament and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Peer Review Mechanism of the AU have gone a long way in improving security as well as creating sustaining conditions of political stability, good governance and economic development.

Mediation has become an indispensable tool in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as more and more conflicts are intra-State rather than inter-State in nature. The major advantage of mediation is that it can be deployed timeously, before the conflict escalates into a full-blown conflict. It is also cost-effective. However, mediation is the least-used — or the least-recognized — among the tools available for conflict resolution and prevention. We therefore support the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen United Nations capacity in mediation through the Department of Political Affairs and the Mediation Support Unit.

South Africa welcomes the view expressed in the report of the Secretary-General that the United Nations, however, does not have a monopoly on mediation and that regional organizations could hold a comparative advantage that allows for early intervention. The key factors in this regard are proximity, knowledge of regional dynamics and the immediate impact of the conflict. Regional and subregional organizations have demonstrated the willingness and capability to facilitate such mediation. Notwithstanding this advantage there is a need for proper coordination and for ensuring synergy, coherence and a well-coordinated strategy between all international actors and regional stakeholders.

We therefore welcome the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in building capacity in mediation and echo the Secretary-General's appeal for flexible financing and for mediation to be properly resourced. In the long term, the advantages and cost-effectiveness of mediation in the prevention of deadly conflict are reasons to embrace its methods, particularly in view of the cost in human life, displacement and destruction of countries' political and economic infrastructure that result from conflicts, as well as the cost of post-conflict

peacebuilding and the deployment of peacekeeping operations.

The role of women as peacemakers cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, the objectives of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) remain valid in ensuring gender participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding activities.

Allow me to highlight some of the factors in mediation that we believe are crucial to the success of mediation. Ownership of the mediation process by the various parties in conflict and the role of support mechanisms are of critical importance. The success of mediation efforts at times cannot be measured in the short term. It is important to allow the parties to find their own solutions, the process of which tends to be long and painstaking. There are no quick fixes or one-size-fits-all solutions.

Mediation must gain the trust of the parties and keep them focused on resolving disputes by identifying and addressing the root causes of the conflict and seeking acceptable resolutions to them. Parties and leaders must always keep in mind that their national responsibility to the welfare of their citizens overrides their narrow individualistic political interests.

Mediation should be seen as a strategic intervention and should be properly planned for. It cannot be an ad hoc engagement — hence the need to build and develop a cadre of mediators with the necessary training and support.

Interlocking early warning systems, sound analytical capability and complementarities with regional organizations and non-governmental organizations could assist in identifying systemic challenges that could potentially trigger conflict.

The role of the Security Council should always be directed at supporting and facilitating the efforts of the mediator, rather than at frustrating them. The Council should always avoid the temptation to pre-empt the outcome of mediation efforts and allow the mediators the necessary time and space to do their work. Our experience is that when the Council has interfered by predetermining the outcome in the mediation efforts either of the Secretary-General or of regional organizations, the results have not always been positive.

We are obviously encouraged by the fact that the Secretary-General shares the view that mediation, by its very nature, has to be quick, quiet and discreet. In that regard, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been working hard, at the subregional level, to facilitate the political process aimed at reaching agreement between the parties in Zimbabwe. We applaud the important role that has been played by SADC in facilitating the Zimbabwe political parties reaching a power-sharing agreement that led to the formation of an inclusive Government. We are convinced that the recent political developments will provide greater impetus for the people of Zimbabwe to carry on with the national reconciliation, economic recovery, reconstruction and development processes. We call on the international community to support those efforts, in particular by lifting the sanctions, which continue to have a destabilizing effect on the recovery and reconstruction processes in Zimbabwe.

Finally, South Africa associates itself with the sentiments expressed in the draft presidential statement to be adopted later today.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Viinanen (Finland): We wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate on this important issue. Similarly, we thank the Secretary-General for his valuable report (S/2009/189) on mediation and its support activities. We trust that this report will start a process that leads to more structured and professional mediation activities not only of the United Nations Secretariat, but also in support of Member States, regional organizations and civil society. Finland aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I have the honour of presenting some additional national views.

Mediation and settlement of disputes lie at the very core of the United Nations, and especially of the Security Council, with its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Finland supports United Nations mediation efforts and stresses the importance of enhancing the capacities for mediation available within the United Nations framework. Hence, we warmly welcome the role and active input of the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, which provides

important expertise for the mediation efforts of the United Nations and its partners.

While the United Nations has traditionally occupied the leading role in international conflict mediation, regional and subregional partners are assuming growing responsibility in that field, as my colleague from South Africa just mentioned. The European Union, while learning from the valuable experience provided by the United Nations, is developing its own capacities for peace mediation. Also, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has developed versatile tools for conflict resolution.

In the light of the current Security Council agenda, particular attention has to be paid to Africa. Finland strongly supports the strengthening of the African Union's mediation capacity. For that purpose, we are providing €2.9 million to finance a joint project on enhancing the African Union's mediation capacity. Against that background, we cannot but encourage the United Nations to further engage in dialogue and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

Local ownership is essential for effective and sustainable mediation results, as local actors are most aware of the actual situations, conditions and sensitivities.

In order to build sustainable peace and security, there is also a need for increased attention to women's equal and active participation in the mediation and peace negotiations. In conflict situations women are capable and powerful actors, and they should be encouraged to actively participate in the settlement of disputes. Up to now, no more than eight women have served as high-level United Nations representatives in the field. We agree with the Secretary-General that that is not enough.

We emphasize once again the need to fully implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and draw the attention of the Council to the recommendations of the recent International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development and International Peace and Security, which was jointly chaired by the President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, and the Finnish President, Tarja Halonen.

The successful act of mediation is not concluded by the signature of a peace agreement. As stated by the Secretary-General, mediation must be followed by immediate post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, notably in the areas of police, rule of law, democracy, human rights, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform. We hope that the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on early recovery and peacebuilding will provide concrete recommendations in making the United Nations system more coherent in the area of early peacebuilding.

Finland has a long tradition in international peace mediation. The Nobel Peace Prize of President Martti Ahtisaari is a testimony of our commitment to that challenging task. At the same time, that highly appreciated Nobel Prize is recognition for the valuable efforts of the United Nations in peace mediation. We believe that the United Nations should strive to groom its internal capacity for mediation. The Secretary-General could create a concrete plan on how to prepare the next generation to follow the steps of previous eminent United Nations peace negotiators. Finland is also committed to engage in and support future mediation efforts of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to welcome the initiative of the Mexican presidency in bringing to the Security Council and to this open debate the issue of mediation and the procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes. We recall that in September 2008, the Security Council, at the initiative of Burkina Faso and of representatives of the members of the Economic Community of West African States, also held a debate on the issue (see S/PV.5979), and in the presidential statement that summed up that debate (S/PRST/2008/36) requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on mediation and ways to enhance it. We take this opportunity to note with interest the report submitted by the Secretary-General in document S/2009/189.

The subject in question is very important. The peaceful settlement of disputes involves a range of instruments to achieve a rational and negotiated solution to situations that may threaten international peace and security. Using those means is vitally important owing to the preventive nature of these processes. If we recall the well-known observation that

the prevention of conflicts is less burdensome that imposing and keeping the peace, we can clearly understand the appropriateness of adopting those methods as widely as possible.

Mediation is a strongly developed mechanism in the area of preventive diplomacy. Preventive diplomacy itself requires great flexibility with regard to the various processes that can be involved in dispute settlement in the pre-conflict phase. In that connection, mediation and peaceful dispute settlement procedures involve not only the principal United Nations organs, in particular the Security Council, but also the full weight and mandated role of the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice, as defined in the Charter.

The history of mediation in the United Nations should be studied on the basis of actual practice. The aspects discussed by the Secretary-General in his report enable us to focus on the current scope of practice and to consider the proposals and recommendations that he intends to implement in 2009. Among these, we highlight the strengthening and professionalization of United Nations mediators; the importance of intervening as soon as possible; reflections and proposals on integrating mediation into field operations; gender policy, in particular within the framework of the Mediation Support Unit; and partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and other civil society actors in this endeavour.

In that connection, and with regard to the Secretary-General's proposals, Uruguay has the following understanding. In principle, we recognize the important work done by the Secretary-General and the Department of Political Affairs, which was strengthened by last year's reform and the progress made following the establishment and structuring of the Mediation Support Unit. We understand that, in the specific case of the Secretary-General's structural and administrative recommendations, they could be implemented by the General Assembly through the Fifth Committee.

While the report was submitted to the Security Council, it would have been useful for the Council, after having considered the document's implications and deciding what course this discussion would take, to pass on its content to the General Assembly, highlighting those aspects on which the Assembly could collaborate with the Council, in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of the Charter. Another point of particular interest would be considering the report's implications and the subsequent debate on the implementation of mediation-related measures under Chapter VIII of the Charter and regional agreements, pursuant to Article 52 of the Charter.

We understand the importance of the reference to regional bodies and to the participation of other non-State actors in certain mediation processes. In that connection, we believe that similar attention should be accorded to all regions. For example, we can cite the specific case of the Organization of American States (OAS), which has the broadest experience in this area. The inter-American system was already developing concrete practices in the area of peaceful dispute settlement towards the end of the nineteenth century. Current instances of regional mediation have enabled us to settle potential conflicts in the region in a timely manner, while enabling the United Nations to devote its efforts to mediation in other regions. However, that does not mean that cooperation is not necessary in our region; rather, it should preserve the inter-American system in order to maintain the early-warning system in the region. The efforts of the OAS and other subregional arrangements will require increasingly sophisticated levels of cooperation with the United Nations.

Another aspect related to the concepts of peacekeeping and peacebuilding through preventive diplomacy is the need to promote national and local capacities in conflict prevention and resolution. Mediation, facilitation and dialogue, as fundamental components of the social fabric at the national or local level, make it possible to create an environment favourable to reconstruction and peacemaking in the event of possible conflict.

Among the other aspects that need to be strengthened, according to the Secretary-General, is gender policy (*S/2009/189, para. 62 (f)*). The report indicates that only seven women have been appointed mediators in the history of the Organization. When women are listed in the various mediator posts, there is also clearly a deficit in terms of equitable geographical distribution — a principle often violated in the bureaucratic history of the United Nations. We demand not only gender equity, but also geographic equity with regard to the appointment of mediators.

Finally, we must consider the financing of this important activity of the Organization, supporting the Secretary-General's proposals for a list of mediators that will allow us to take timely advantage of the experience accumulated in various regions and to maintain a competent and effective Mediation Support Unit in the Secretariat.

The Security Council, for its part, should attach the greatest importance to preventive activity, clearly supporting the Secretary-General's proposals and continuing to study, as a priority, the peaceful settlement of disputes as the best alternative for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Bonghyun (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to address the Security Council today on the important topic of mediation and settlement of disputes. I also express my appreciation to the Secretary-General and his team for their hard work and for the insightful report before us on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189).

As we witness the increasing cost of dealing with the shattered remnants of peace, the value of timely and efficiently engaged mediation is being more and more widely recognized. Considering the increasing importance and value of mediation, it is imperative to sum up the lessons learned so far and to devise the most effective mediation tools for resolving disputes at an early stage. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that mediation has proved to be the most promising means for the peaceful settlement of disputes; however, the practice of mediation has received disappointingly little attention and support.

In that regard, today's open debate is most timely, taking the lead from the results of the high-level meeting of the Council last year (see S/PV.5979), and will help us to promote and support mediations and other means of the peaceful settlement of disputes more professionally and consistently. In contributing to that discussion, my delegation would like to highlight the following points.

First, although the United Nations does not have a monopoly on mediation, the Organization is in an ideal position to provide mediation in most cases. With 192 Member States, which have agreed to resolve disputes peacefully, the United Nations is the only global intergovernmental organization whose primary function is the maintenance of international peace and security. Thanks to the universality and the multilateral nature of the United Nations, the trustworthiness and impartiality of mediation are more readily and easily recognized by the parties concerned when mediation is practiced by the United Nations itself or by other organizations or individuals endorsed by it. More often, the Organization's endorsement of a mediator has also helped to bolster the tools and the capacity of the mediator. In that regard, the United Nations deserves the focused investment of strengthening and consolidating mediation capabilities.

Secondly, increasing mediation capacity needs to be focused on providing mediation at the earliest possible phases of conflict by the most capable and relevant mediators, aided by professional and sufficient support. In particular, the importance of engaging at the earliest possible stage needs no further emphasis. To achieve this, thorough databases of dedicated mediators should be created so that when a need for mediation arises, we will spend the least amount of time and energy locating mediators with the right set of attributes for the situation.

Thirdly, a basic platform of support that encompasses experts, finances and administrative services should be established for effective and responsive mediation. Considering the increasing professional and complex nature of mediation, systematic programmes should be devised to create future professional mediator corps. However, it was alarming to learn from the report that adequate and dedicated human and financial resources have not yet been secured in the United Nations. A comprehensive mediation education system is also yet to be realized.

Further efforts need to be made in those areas, and I believe that the Secretary-General has taken the right steps to remedy this issue by establishing the Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs. The recently established mediation start-up funds will also be instrumental in providing necessary financial support to the mediation team. My delegation supports the Secretary-General in proactively seeking ways to mobilize adequate funding for mediation support and to establish a sufficient support platform for mediations that are responsive to the demands of fast-moving peace processes.

Fourthly, disputes should be considered within a regional or subregional context if mediation is to be successful. Therefore, close partnerships with established regional organizations are very important and a more strategic discussion should be held on ways to establish a clearer framework for effective decision-making and coordination with regional organizations. We also need to find ways to ensure that the proper regional and subregional context is incorporated into the mediation process when there is no relevant regional or subregional organization established.

Fifthly, good offices and mediation have been more effectively and successfully pursued and practiced when they have been backed up by unified and sustained support from the Security Council. As illustrated in the Secretary-General's report, the Security Council has many tools that it can wield to support and promote mediation and to call spoilers into the process of mediation. My delegation believes that the Security Council should continue to keep actively abreast of the overall progress of peacemaking efforts and stay unified in providing necessary support for mediation processes when needed.

Finally, my delegation is concerned about the low number of women in formal roles in the mediation process. The Security Council, in line with its resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), should encourage women's participation in all stages of peace processes and in all official and unofficial roles. We should remember that the low proportion of women in mediation processes represents not only a gender imbalance, but also the possible neglect of constructive resources for mediation and untapped talent pools.

My delegation values the cost-effectiveness of successful mediation and believes that the core aspect of successful mediation rests on helping concerned parties to build confidence, identifying the core interests of each party with a view to starting a successful negotiation, and envisaging the benefits of a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Re-emphasizing our view that the United Nations should be at the centre of promoting and supporting the mediation process with an adequate support platform, I would like to end my remarks by asking the Secretary-General and the Security Council to continue to promote mediation and to establish an adequate and sufficient support platform for mediation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Palouš (Czech Republic): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for presenting the valuable report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189). Mediation is a critically important tool among the limited responses available to the international community for conflict management. It can be applied at all stages of the conflict cycle, from prevention and peacemaking to the implementation of peace agreements. When it works well, the world might not even notice that a potentially harmful conflict has been defused. When it fails, extinguishing the crisis requires much more effort and resources. That is why we must further improve the practice of international mediation and see to it that negotiated settlements to conflicts bring long-lasting stability with increasing frequency. The Secretary-General's report contains a large number of lessons learned and useful recommendations which must now be implemented in order to make mediation even more effective in the future.

The success of international mediation rests on partnership, cooperation and the mutual support of all actors concerned. The United Nations has been involved in mediation for over 60 years, and enhancing its capacities will further strengthen the collective impact of its mediation initiatives. The European Union supported the establishment of the United Nations Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs and continues to contribute financially to its activities, through both the European Commission and individual European Union member States. We also support the proposed system-wide approach to mediation and the development of a standby team of regional and thematic experts.

One of the prerequisites for effective mediation initiatives is the availability of flexible financial and human resources. The Secretary-General's report points to the fact that mediation tends to be most effective when launched early, and the European Union

regards positively the recent establishment of a mediation start-up fund. In order to further enhance our cooperation in mediation, the European Union and the United Nations should develop a mechanism of sharing expertise and lessons learned, develop joint training opportunities and work together on the establishment of a roster of mediation experts.

The European Union supports the promotion of mediation as an efficient and cost-effective instrument of conflict prevention and resolution and is — as underlined in the Secretary-General's report — increasingly engaged in mediation efforts. The involvement of the European Union in mediation is twofold — direct and indirect. There are a number of actors within the European Union who, on occasion, play a role in international facilitation, mediation and dialogue processes. The European Union Presidency, High Representative Javier Solana and the European Union special representatives and members of the European Commission are among the most visible actors, but the heads of European Commission delegations and the heads of the European Security and Defence Policy mission are also frequently engaged in mediation activities.

The European Union is in the process of strengthening and professionalizing its mediation and mediation support capacity so as to use that tool more effectively. We appreciate the continuing cooperation with the Mediation Support Unit in that endeavour.

Like all other regional organizations, the European Union has its own interests, which may sometimes compromise our ability to serve as impartial mediators. The European Union has therefore developed a system of indirect support to third-party mediators, which also builds on the capacity and knowledge of non-governmental organizations. Specifically, the Instrument for Stability administered by the European Commission includes the Facility for urgent actions involving Policy Advice, Technical Assistance, Mediation and Reconciliation.

The African Union is also playing an increasingly important role in mediation, and the European Union is committed to assisting in further developing its capacities. Under the African Peace Facility, an Early Response Mechanism has recently been established to support the mediation efforts of the African Union and other African regional organizations.

Today's debate gives us the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved through mediation and to identify the challenges of negotiated settlements. We should not consider mediation in isolation. Peace agreements have too often fallen apart, partly owing to the lack of a clear implementation plan. The United Nations and its partners need to build coherence across the conflict spectrum, including in the post-conflict peacebuilding phase, to improve the effectiveness of mediation, minimize the threat from spoilers and ensure that the agreements reached are sustained. As the report points out, it is important that transitional justice issues be adequately covered in the agreement and that the rule of law be re-established. Where serious crimes have been committed, the culture of impunity often leads to a cycle of violence that undermines sustainable peace.

Finally, the European Union appreciates the Secretary-General's commitment to improving gender expertise and balance at all levels. Women's absence from peace negotiations and the lack of gender expertise in mediation teams seriously limit the extent to which women's experiences of conflict and consequent needs for recovery are addressed in those processes. An analysis by the United Nations Development Fund for Women shows that, in 13 major comprehensive peace agreement processes since 2000, not one single woman was appointed as a mediator. These statistics need to change if future peace agreements are to be achievable, representative and likely to secure durable peace. Sustainable peace cannot be managed through the marginalization of such a large and vital constituency.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): We thank the Secretariat for producing a very good report (S/2009/189) on this topic, and we thank Burkina Faso for its leadership on this issue.

Given the purposes of this Organization, mediation should naturally play a central role in its activities. To an outside observer, it must therefore come as a surprise how little attention and limited resources have been invested in this area so far and that it is only now that we are talking about the need to professionalize these efforts. It appears that the inherent strengths of mediation are, ironically, a weakness in the context of intergovernmental

discussions. It is essentially preventive in nature, done in sometimes very discreet ways, potentially very cost-effective and ideally carried out at a time when a conflict may not be visible. Our neglect of mediation so far is thus an expression of our continued reluctance to invest in preventive diplomacy. While we have talked about the need for such diplomacy for many years now, we have yet to make the transition in practice.

We must consider one central statement in the report in this context: "Early mediation in a preventive context can, if successful, obviate the need for some peacekeeping missions" (*S/2009/189, para. 59*). At a time when peacekeeping costs continue to skyrocket and the relevant parts of the Secretariat are clearly overstretched, we hope that this will help make mediation indeed the core activity that it should have been in the first place.

The establishment of a Mediation Support Unit was an important step, made after of years of consultations, and is showing positive first results. We must carry this momentum forward on the basis of the recommendations contained in the report, which we support in their entirety. We welcome the presidential statement that we understand will be adopted later today, but more importantly, we hope that there will be concrete and early follow-up on the recommendations by all those whose contribution is needed — that is, this Council itself, the Secretariat and the General Assembly.

Allow me to make some brief remarks on three specific areas of the report.

First, we welcome the concise and thoughtful paragraphs on peace and justice, in particular the reaffirmation that there can be no United Nations-endorsed peace agreements that offer amnesty for the most serious crimes under international law. The relationship between peace and justice can be complex, and mediators can find themselves in the midst of relevant discussions. It must indeed be clear that mediators cannot negotiate justice issues if they are dealt with by independent judicial bodies — such as, in particular, the International Criminal Court — and that the situation under international law in this respect must be clear to all parties involved. Chief among the factors that keep conflict cycles alive are spoilers of mediation efforts, who benefit from war economies in particular and often operate in a climate of impunity. Negotiated settlements of disputes are particularly prone to relapse into violence, and addressing impunity for serious crimes is an essential element in preventing such violence and thus helps consolidate achievements reached through mediation.

Secondly, the selection process for special representatives and special envoys of the Secretary-General and the efforts to build operational support for these envoys must take into account the important role that women play in mediation and the settlement of disputes. This has been said many times in the past, including in the presidential statement adopted last year (S/PRST/2008/39), but the reality is of course different. As stated by the speaker preceding me, since 2000 not a single woman has been appointed as a mediator in negotiations of comprehensive peace agreements, and only one woman is currently serving as a special representative of the Secretary-General. What is important in the relevant part of the report is that the involvement of women is not a matter of political correctness, but a question of making mediation efforts more effective.

Thirdly, we must address the issue of resources. The very sensible measures mentioned in the report, such as training programmes and developing capacities for operational support, of course cost money. But more importantly, they are an investment that is likely to lead to a significant reduction of the overall costs for the Organization. We wish to state our view that mediation is a core activity of the United Nations and, as such, should in principle be funded from the regular budget. At the same time, we are aware, of course, that this will not be possible in the near future, and we will continue our financial support for the Mediation Support Unit. However, we hope that this area will attract particular attention in future discussions on the regular budget.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation would like to commend the Mexican presidency of the Security Council for convening this important discussion to evaluate the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189). We thank Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe for his incisive and comprehensive statement.

Mediation is a strategy widely accepted and extensively utilized by Member States, including Nigeria, for the pacific settlement of all forms of dispute. Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter has long recognized negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or other peaceful means as valuable conflict-resolution techniques.

The efficiency of mediation was amply demonstrated in the peaceful resolution of the conflict over the Bakassi peninsula between Nigeria and its neighbour, Cameroon. Through intense mediation, the exercise of political will and commitment to the international judicial process, the nearly inflamed situation over the Bakassi region was resolved amicably.

In several other conflict situations in Africa, Asia and elsewhere, mediation has proven to be a useful, inexpensive and less risky peacemaking activity. Indeed, it remains a tool that needs to be actively utilized in all existing conflict situations, whether intra-State or inter-State.

Given the importance of international mediation, demonstrated by the frequency with which it has been used to settle all types of conflicts in different parts of the world, it is regrettable that it has not been given the requisite attention and support within the United Nations system. It is in this context that my delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/189), which aims at bringing mediation to the centre of the peacemaking activities of the United Nations. My delegation believes that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, has a crucial role to play in strengthening the Organization's mediation capacity. It is the expectation of my delegation that today's discussion will engender the outcome necessary to reinforce the mediation efforts of the United Nations.

International mediation should be viewed as a specialist endeavour, requiring skills and techniques such as persuasion and the ability to bargain and to exercise leverage. The United Nations must therefore guard against the appointment of international mediators solely on the basis of their political stature rather than on the basis of their competence as mediators. It is necessary that mediators be proficient, resilient, impartial, experienced and equipped to manage the complexities of deep-rooted conflicts. They must be familiar with a wide range of mediation strategies and tactics in order to effectively deal with the disputants.

The Mediation Support Unit should possess the capacity to function in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations. It is imperative that the Unit coordinate its activities with the United Nations early warning mechanism, and that it function in support of United Nations post-conflict recovery efforts, including those of the Peacebuilding Commission. United Nations mediators should seek to work closely with their counterparts in regional and subregional organizations.

Some of those organizations have developed advanced mediation and dispute settlement mechanisms that could support the efforts of the United Nations. The African Union Panel of the Wise, a key component of the African Peace and Security Architecture, and the Council of Elders of the Economic Community of West African States, have substantial experience in high-profile mediation. Similarly, the Southern African Development Community has also demonstrated an enviable capacity to mediate conflicts in Southern Africa. The United Nations mediation mechanism could also benefit from the capacities, goodwill and specialization of some regional peacemaking non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations.

To conclude, I wish to reiterate that the success rate of the United Nations mediatory role will depend upon how sensitive the Organization is to the socio-cultural milieu of every conflict. The United Nations must therefore take concrete measures to assure the parties to all conflicts of its neutrality and its receptiveness to local values.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mrs. Núñez Mordoche (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to participate in this debate on behalf of the 118 members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The Movement reaffirms that the United Nations, its Charter and international law remain indispensable tools and central elements in the preservation and maintenance of international peace and security. NAM supports the strengthening, within the framework of the Charter, of the capacity and efficiency of the

United Nations in its efforts to prevent, control and peacefully resolve conflicts and disputes. Improving the capacity of the United Nations to prevent and settle disputes is more effective than having to deal with the costly aftermath of wars and armed conflicts. The pacific settlement of disputes is key to the Organization's Charter obligation to maintain international peace and security.

In acknowledging the relationship between economic and social development and peace and security, NAM considers important to ensure that any effort to transform the United Nations into a more effective instrument for preventing conflict should take into account the need for a balanced, coherent and comprehensive approach, in accordance with the Charter and international law, in order to enhance conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding strategies with the aim of achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

In this context, it is critical that all of the principal organs of the United Nations play an active role in evolving and implementing a more effective collective security system, in accordance with their respective functions and powers, without upsetting the balance as established by the Charter.

The Non-Aligned Movement regrets that in recent years the Security Council has been too quick to threaten or authorize enforcement action in some cases while being silent and inactive in others. Furthermore, the Council has increasingly resorted to Chapter VII of the Charter as an umbrella for addressing issues that do not necessarily pose an immediate threat to international peace and security.

A careful review of these trends indicates that the Council could have opted for alternative measures to respond more appropriately to particular cases. Instead of excessive and hasty use of Chapter VII, efforts should be made to fully utilize the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII for the pacific settlement of disputes.

In accordance with Chapter VI, Article 33, the Security Council should call upon the parties to any dispute, when it deems necessary, to settle their dispute by means such as negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.

The Non-Aligned Movement stresses that Chapter VII should be invoked, as intended, as a measure of last resort. Unfortunately, in some cases provisions of Articles 41 and 42 have been too quickly resorted to, while the other options, including mediation, had not been fully exhausted.

Sanctions imposed by the Security Council remain an issue of serious concern to the non-aligned countries. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the imposition of sanctions should be considered only after all means of peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter have been exhausted and a thorough consideration undertaken of the short-term and long-term effects of such sanctions.

Historically, the Non-Aligned Movement has given much to the process of pacific settlement of disputes, and has yet more to offer. To the search for solutions to disputes and conflicts, the Movement brings its long-standing commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as its partnerships with the United Nations and regional organizations.

The Movement reaffirms its principled positions concerning peaceful settlement of disputes, which include, among others, the following:

First, it is incumbent upon all States to defend, preserve and promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law, including the pacific settlement of disputes and the non-use or threat of use of force.

Secondly, all States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Resort to Chapter VII of the Charter as an umbrella for addressing issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security must be avoided. In that regard, the Security Council should fully utilize the relevant Charter provisions, where appropriate, including those of Chapters VI and VIII.

Thirdly, all States should promote the principle of the non-use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes, rather than the threat of force or use of force, as a means of achieving collective security, bearing in mind "that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest", as stipulated in the Charter.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming the Non-Aligned Movement's strong commitment to defending the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, as well as the means envisaged in the Charter for the pacific settlement of disputes and non-resort to the threat or use of force.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Norway.

Mrs. Juul (Norway): Let me start by thanking the Secretary-General and his staff for their report (S/2009/189), and Mexico for convening today's meeting. I would also like to thank the President of Burkina Faso, who initiated the process by calling for a high-level meeting on mediation and the settlement of disputes last year — a timely reminder of the importance of this subject.

The very first paragraph of the United Nations Charter states that a key purpose of the Organization is to "take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace". Mediation is a key instrument in this process, and consequently must rank among the core activities of the United Nations. The old adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" holds true in international relations as well, and the United Nations is more often than not what the world looks to for the ounce of prevention, in the form of mediation and conflict prevention.

It is no coincidence that two Secretaries-General — Kofi Annan and Dag Hammarskjöld — the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations itself have received the Nobel Peace Prize, all of them honoured for their work in pursuit of peace. We must never forget that preventing conflict was the main reason for establishing the United Nations, and we must make sure that the Organization is well equipped and ready to take on this responsibility whenever crises threaten to erupt.

We have to admit that this is not always the case today. Time and time again, we see the United Nations being forced to pass the hat among Member States to ask for voluntary contributions in order to do the job mandated in the Charter. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the size of the Organization's regular budget matches the size of the job we are asking it to do, and it is the United Nations responsibility to be proactive and put this budget to good use in trouble spots around the world.

Mediators grapple with widely varying situations, yet some aspects — dialogue and access, early engagement and a flexible and coherent approach — are crucial to all international mediation efforts. The mediator must talk to and have access to all parties involved. He or she must be impartial to the parties themselves, but not to the actions of the parties. The mediator must be brought into the process as early as possible. A non-threatening, quiet diplomatic channel has the advantage of eliminating many of the political risks carried by a more public process. It also makes it more difficult for spoilers to undermine the work. The mediator's approach must be flexible, bringing all relevant actors, such as the United Nations, regional organizations, civil society and individual States together, complementing each other's efforts.

The challenge is to make everybody coordinate their efforts. Last year in Kenya, we saw that the Security Council, the African Union, a former Secretary-General of the United Nations and other international actors, together with the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) and other parts of the Secretariat, were able to reach a successful outcome during the challenging post-election period. This is exactly what we want and what we would like future mediators to learn from.

Like many others before me, I would like to draw our collective attention to the fact that today, almost 10 years after resolution 1325 (2000) strongly urged the United Nations and Member States to take action to bring more women into peace processes, very little progress has been made. Among the peace negotiators deployed by the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and Member States over the past decade, women have been few and far between. We know that women bring different issues to the table, and that they contribute to a more durable and inclusive peace. We know that we only recruit from 50 per cent of the talent pool as long as we do not include women in sufficient numbers. And we know that half of the population can feel excluded from the process and less committed to the outcome when they have not been part of the decision-making. We commend the work that has been done on trying to recruit more women as mediators, but call for renewed and strengthened efforts from the United Nations and Member States to translate the words of resolution

1325 (2000) into concrete action — action that will bring women into the highest levels of mediation.

In closing, I would like to welcome the improvement of the United Nations mediation apparatus, particularly the Mediation Support Unit. Last year's strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs meant that an increased number of mediation posts were covered by the regular budget, a development we strongly support. As stated earlier, mediation is a core activity of the United Nations and must also be at the core of the regular budget.

Norway will continue to support the MSU financially, in particular the standby team of experts. We encourage the entire United Nations system to take advantage of the unique expertise this team offers. The first team will complete its work in June this year, and we look forward to learning more about its experiences.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month, and thank you for holding this open meeting and giving us the opportunity to make our own contribution to the debate on this important subject. I associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We are glad that you have chosen the issue of mediation for the thematic debate of the Council during your presidency, and we also welcomed the thematic debate held by the Council last September under the presidency of the President of Burkina Faso to consider this important subject. We were similarly satisfied to witness the consensus expressed at that time by members of the Council on the importance of supporting and encouraging mediation efforts at the international and regional levels. That consensus was expressed explicitly through the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2008/36.

Mediation is at the heart of the work of the Security Council and the mandate conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. When we talk about the mandate of the Council, we must consider the purposes of the Charter, which emphasizes early and peaceful solutions of conflicts, especially in Chapter VI. Although the Council also has a mandate under Chapter VII, the latter must be used only as a last resort when need arises. Therefore it is a cause of concern to see that in recent years Council resolutions have been frequently adopted under Chapter VII. In addition, the deployment of peacekeeping forces and other measures of the use of force result in a much greater financial burden than the cost of diplomatic mediation. Hence the relevance of the saying "prevention is better than cure".

Consequently, diplomatic mediation remains the most effective way to reach the desired peaceful settlement, as experience has shown in many cases. The Security Council must therefore encourage all forms of mediation that contribute to the peaceful resolution of disputes. We also encourage the Council to continue to attach premium importance to the issue of mediation and its promotion, including by considering the possibility of establishing a subsidiary body entrusted with the task of seeking ways of enhancing mediation by third parties and other means of peaceful settlement of disputes and disagreements.

If we carefully examine the factors of success of dispute resolution through diplomatic mediation, we can conclude that that success is predicated upon a number of elements.

The mediator must be fair-minded, truthful, impartial and without vested interest in the continuation of the conflict or in a specific outcome to it. The best example of the importance of impartiality in mediation is the persistence of the crisis in the Middle East for over six decades. In the same vein, the intermediary has to be fully aware of the underlying root causes and origins of the conflict. He also needs to have a thorough understanding of the characteristics of each case and each region and take them into account, particularly conventions, norms and agreements that exist between the parties to the conflict. The mediator must have the open-mindedness that allows him to understand and respect the cultures, sacred symbols and the views of the parties to the conflict. Last but not least, the mediator must, by having these qualities, gain the trust of the parties to the dispute.

Other factors play a role in the success of mediation. Indeed, it is of critical importance that all influential stakeholders, or those that are likely to influence the durability of the settlement reached, take part in the negotiations. It is also important to

strengthen and consolidate the genuine desire of the participants in the dialogue process to reach a genuine settlement. We must work to mobilize the necessary momentum in order to support and implement mediation-driven agreements, to achieve consensus and, in some cases, to secure reconstruction processes. There is also a need to keep the efforts of mediation processes from being sabotaged by some stakeholders.

The efforts for reconciliation and accord between conflicting parties will be doomed to failure in the long term if we do not work towards spreading a culture of peace, renunciation of violence, acceptance of others and peaceful expression of disagreement among the parties to the conflict and their popular bases.

Based on the views and proposals that I have mentioned, we believe that the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in his report to the Council on this matter are worthy of consideration. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, which provides the necessary expertise to support mediation efforts of the United Nations and of the regional and subregional organizations, constitutes a step forward. We should continue to develop the activities of that Unit and its involvement with Member States under the principle of respect of sovereignty.

There is no doubt that the endeavours and good offices efforts exerted by the Secretary-General, either directly or through his representatives and special envoys and United Nations mediators, aiming at the resolution of conflicts in many regions of the world, are commendable and worthy of assistance and support. Therefore, the State of Qatar annually supports the Trust Fund to Support Special Missions and Other Activities Related to Preventive Diplomacy and Peacemaking, in the belief that the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations are important.

The United Nations must also support regional and subregional arrangements with a view to reaching peaceful settlement of disputes, taking into account the specificities of each region due to its circumstances, which the regional arrangements understand best. In particular, support from regional arrangements in resolving regional conflicts is embedded in the Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council has recognized this on several occasions recently when discussing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. We recall that the Council, in its presidential statement S/PRST/2008/36, was intent on enhancing the support provided by the United Nations to regional and subregional mediation efforts through the enhancement of cooperation. We welcome that move and call upon the Council to fulfil that pledge.

Finally, allow me to move from theory to present a part of the practical experience of the State of Qatar in diplomatic mediation, since it includes some shining examples of what mediation can achieve in bringing the parties to a dispute to the negotiating table so they can reach agreements to end their differences, or in putting them on the track of settlement if that mediation is fair, honest and impartial.

We highlight in this regard the efforts of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, in May of last year to bring Lebanese parties to the dialogue table in Doha, and the success of these mediation efforts in reaching the Doha agreement, which was supported by the Security Council in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/17). That national reconciliation opened the door for the election of a president of Lebanon, ending the state of instability. We would like to highlight in this regard that the Qatari mediation efforts in Lebanon were in accordance with the decision of the Council of the League of Arab States that established an Arab ministerial committee to mediate an end to the political crisis in Lebanon, which demonstrates the importance of the role played by regional organizations in the field of mediation, as I mentioned earlier in my statement.

Last February, another agreement was reached in Doha as a result of mediation efforts by the Government of the State of Qatar, i.e. the Accord of Good Intentions and Confidence-building, signed in Doha by the Government of National Unity of the Sudan and their brothers, the Justice and Equality Movement of Darfur. My country still endeavours to complete this effort, with the participation of Mr. Jibril Bassolé, Joint Mediator of the United Nations and the African Union. This also demonstrates what I mentioned about the usefulness of cooperation between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations.

The State of Qatar also made contacts to resolve the differences between some Arab countries and the West, and some internal Arab differences. I cannot go into details here, but those efforts are within the scope

of the maintenance of international peace and security through mediation to settle disputes.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor next to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Badji (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I should like first to congratulate you warmly, Mr. President, for having organized this public Security Council debate on the maintenance of international peace and security: mediation and settlement of disputes.

I should also like, on behalf of my country, Senegal, to say how much we admire and are grateful to the sisterly delegation of Burkina Faso, which, having taken the happy initiative of holding a high-level debate on mediation and dispute settlement, has done everything to see to it that the consideration of this important question, which is central to the current concerns of the international community, is given all of the necessary attention.

The interest of all Member States in this question should be measured against the complexity of current conflict situations, including inter- and intra-State conflicts, which involve massive loss of human life and the interruption of the social, political and economic lives of a large number of countries.

Synergy and close interaction between the United Nations — which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — and its partners, in particular the regional organizations, which are a complementary instrument to United Nations action, are necessary to prevent these human tragedies. As has been shown by the positive experiences we have seen throughout the world as a result of the United Nations providing good offices, mediators and special envoys of the Secretary-General that have defused many crises, the effectiveness and the benefits of mediation are clear for all to see.

Other achievements by regional organizations, subregional organizations, civil society or simply by people of good will also reinforce this conviction.

Clearly, many atrocities could have been avoided and thousands of human lives saved had mediation mechanisms been mobilized in many conflict situations throughout the world.

The United Nations, which was created, inter alia, to save present and succeeding generations from the scourge of war and whose Charter makes pacific settlement of disputes one of its main purposes, must therefore make mediation central to its action, to make it, if not the most important instrument for dispute settlement, an important tool for that end.

Recent steps to strengthen United Nations mediation capacities, including the creation of the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs and its technical teams, are certainly encouraging, but efforts are still needed if mediation is to play its proper role. To achieve that, the challenge must be met of providing significant financial resources and experienced, highly qualified human resources.

Another challenge that should be met is that of having women participate in mediation activities. Women, who with children are the people most affected by conflicts, have an important role to play in conflict prevention and settlement. My delegation therefore supports the initiative to involve them more in mediation activities and very much supports the recommendation contained in resolution 1325 (2000), which urges the Secretary-General to appoint more women representatives and special envoys to good offices missions.

The report of the Secretary-General in document S/2009/189, which we welcome, stresses the important role of mediation organizations, particularly in a framework of close cooperation with the United Nations. In this respect, Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations clearly outlines the modalities for cooperation between the Security Council and the regional organizations. We welcome the recognition in this report of the fact that the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations, which goes back to the creation of the Organization of African Unity, is one of the most dynamic in the area of peacekeeping.

As the Secretary-General recalled in paragraph 44 of his report dated 7 April 2008, published as document S/2008/186** — which deals with the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security — "Most regional organizations are undertaking conflict prevention activities". The African Union does not lag behind here because its system for peace management extends from preventive diplomacy to peacebuilding, and includes peacekeeping.

However, the regional organizations, in particular the African Union, must acquire the means to be more attentive to the early signs of tension that could lead to conflict and take the necessary steps, in close cooperation with the United Nations, in particular the Security Council.

By setting up the Group of Wise Men, the African Union understood and recognized that conflicts, be they laten or overt, can be resolved only by political means, that is to say, through negotiation. That is why the Group of Wise Men of the African Union should be given the greatest possible support, which would enable it to provide well-considered advice to the Chairmen of the African Union and if the AU Commission, which could, on that basis, engage in intensive preventive diplomacy activities, in particular mediation and good offices. After all, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.

However, for proper prevention, we must remember — as was recalled by the Secretary-General in his report in document S/2008/18, dated 14 January 2008 — that prevention is a multidimensional task involving political decisions, humanitarian activities and development activities, which require that organizations work in close cooperation with the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council and its specialized agencies.

Cooperation between the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the regional organizations is particularly necessary since growing attention should likewise be given to peacebuilding strategies and reconciliation. The African Union has already taken the lead when it adopted, at the seventh regular session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2006, the strategic framework for post-conflict rebuilding and development.

Finally, mediation is a valuable tool in a world buffeted by manifold complex crises.

Combining mediation with peacebuilding, the United Nations could not only prevent conflicts from escalating, but also ensure that those that are being resolved are extinguished once and for all. Those combined actions would at last reduce the financial and human costs of peacekeeping and peacemaking operations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Mr. Muita (Kenya): At the outset, Sir, let me express my appreciation to you and the entire delegation of Mexico for organizing and presiding over this important debate. I also wish to thank Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his statement. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Kenya welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, contained in document S/2009/189. The Secretary-General's report highlights the enormous challenges that we collectively face in providing professional mediation assistance to parties in conflict. It also offers very useful recommendations on strengthening the role of mediation as a cost-effective method of resolving disputes. My delegation fully supports his recommendations.

The special focus of today's debate on enhancing mediation and the settlement of disputes is timely. We recognize that the cost of such conflicts, in both human and resource terms, has been huge and negative. In addition, the absence of peace and security inhibits development and creates an enormous financial burden. Nevertheless, my delegation is encouraged by this debate because it underscores the fact that mediation is now receiving increased attention as an integral part of the global conflict resolution process.

There is no denying that, over the years, the United Nations has increasingly played an important role in mediating inter- and intra-State conflicts. However, we acknowledge that this increased role has not been matched with the necessary resources to build local, national and regional capacities. It is my hope that more resources will be allocated to ensure timely responses when problems are less complicated and the parties involved fewer. In that way, the chances of success would be increased tremendously. We hope that the reinforcement of the Department of Political Affairs, particularly through the creation of the Mediation Support Unit, will provide the opportunity to explore that area further.

Kenya's other area of concern is the role of women in mediation. We recognize that women's contribution to society is crucial and yet, more often than not, they have little or no say in the resolution of conflicts that severely and negatively impact on them.

It is therefore crucial that we address the structural and institutional impediments to women's equal and full involvement in the mediation process. My delegation would therefore like to see more women appointed to senior positions, both at United Nations headquarters and in field missions. We believe that this will contribute to spurring the efforts to integrate women's issues into the mainstream of agenda-setting and decision-making at all levels in the peace process. The implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) will contribute greatly towards achieving that objective.

At the regional level, Kenya has actively participated in the mediation of conflicts and the search for the peaceful settlement of various disputes, particularly in the Horn of Africa, through the various peace initiatives of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, as well as in the Great Lakes region, in collaboration with the United Nations and other development partners. The holistic approach adopted under the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, in which problems are addressed in a broader and coordinated manner, is a unique example that may benefit other regions.

In conclusion, it is the considered view of my delegation that, as the very successful mediation efforts in my own country last year would tend to indicate, the international community should not wait for a painful stalemate to develop before offering mediation. Otherwise, we may lose the opportunity to resolve the conflict at an early stage. The United Nations peacekeeping budget is enormous, and there is no doubt that it would be greatly reduced if more resources were expended in pre-emptive mediation and the settlement of disputes mechanisms.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): May I congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. The Pakistan delegation welcomes the holding of this open debate. I am sure that, under your able guidance, this discussion will be productive and will contribute to our collective efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in one of its central objectives — conflict prevention and the pacific settlement of disputes.

Through the framework and vast spectrum of modalities envisaged in Chapter VI and other provisions of the Charter, the United Nations organs, acting in balance and harmony, can play an important role in preventing disputes from arising between parties, in preventing existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and in containing and resolving conflicts when they occur. The Security Council, in particular, has to make a wider and effective use of the procedures and means for the pacific settlement of disputes, particularly Articles 33 to 38 of the Charter. Indeed, it is that aspect of our work at the United Nations that transforms into action the commitment that we the people made in the Preamble of the Charter to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In the maintenance of international peace and security, that is what operationalizes the purposes and principles of the United Nations, beginning with Article 1 of the Charter, which, as a matter of fact, encapsulates well our deliberations today.

Over the years, Pakistan has followed with great interest and attachment the discussions in the United Nations and the Security Council on the topic of the pacific settlement of disputes. Under its presidency of the Security Council in May 2003, Pakistan organized a debate on the role of the Security Council in the pacific settlement of disputes. In the presidential statement dated 13 May 2003 (S/PRST/2003/5), adopted in that debate, the Security Council, inter alia, underscored that the efforts to strengthen the process of the peaceful settlement of disputes should be continued and made more effective. The special focus on mediation, under the presidency of Burkina Faso last September and with the adoption of S/PRST/2008/36, was an important sequel to the consideration by the Council of the pacific settlement of disputes agenda.

Let me thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189), which has merits and deserves serious consideration. The United Nations has had some notable successes in the areas of pacific settlement and mediation, including with the support of regional organizations and other partners, particularly in Africa. The emphasis placed in the Secretary-General's report on early engagement and on processes addressing the root causes of conflicts is, in our view, one of the key lessons learned from past engagements. It should be accorded due priority in ongoing and future work, strengthening and making full use of the comparative advantages of regional, national and local capacities, for mediation, conflict prevention, reconciliation and dialogue are essential parts of the wider effort. In our

own region, the jirgas, panchayats and other traditional mechanisms are considered useful and time-tested tools for mediation, conciliation and arbitration at the local level.

As pointed out in the report, the need for professional mediation assistance is evident. One cannot agree more on the imperative of system-wide capacity-building, leadership and specialization in that field. Maintaining a pool of mediation experts and facilitating their deployment, when required, are recommendations of a practical nature. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit and the standby team of experts is a welcome step. The requirement of further resources for Secretariat capacity may also be considered.

While many of the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General are focused on capacity-building and resources, important as they may be, I would like to underline that the effectiveness of mediation and other means of pacific settlement are more a function of factors that are largely political in nature. We may not be able to put the enhanced capacity to any use if, for example, we are not able to generate the necessary political will among the general membership, the members of the Security Council and, in particular, the parties to disputes to accept mediation or other means of pacific settlement and then demonstrate the commitment in good faith to following through with their obligations.

A few of the long-standing situations on the agenda of the Security Council need to be mentioned here. One is Palestine and the other Jammu and Kashmir, which are in ways the victims of such circumstances. It is manifest that those disputes are such that their continuance endangers the maintenance of international peace, security and harmony.

On Palestine, the Security Council has been unable to implement its own resolutions, which has been a severe blow to its credibility. As the Council considered this question yesterday, it was evident that a renewed, serious and concerted effort was required to put the peace process back on track and to rebuild the confidence shattered by the recurrent resort to the use of force.

Closer to home, the Council need not be reminded that one of the earliest applications of Chapter VI of the Charter was in the Jammu and Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan after it had been referred to the Security Council. Several Security Council resolutions, accepted by both India and Pakistan, provided that the final disposition of the state of Jammu and Kashmir would be made in accordance with the will of the people, expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. The Security Council also instituted several mechanisms, including the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, the deployment of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, and the appointment of United Nations representatives who consulted the parties and submitted reports on how to resolve the dispute in accordance with the provisions of the Security Council resolutions. Those resolutions remain unimplemented to date, and hopes pinned on bilateral dialogue have not been fulfilled. However, Pakistan remains steadfast in seeking a just and peaceful solution to the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

We hope that India will agree to the resumption of the comprehensive dialogue process between our two countries. We hope that the international community, particularly the Security Council and the Secretary-General, will support this objective of durable peace and progress in our region. In order to have a holistic view, the Security Council should review the extent to which provisions of Chapter VI have been utilized and implemented. Needless to say, we cannot fully succeed in our efforts to strengthen the conflict prevention and pacific settlement dimensions if the Security Council is not able to preserve and reinforce the central obligation of Member States under the Charter to refrain from the threat of the use of force.

Without repetition, I would like to endorse the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, especially with respect to the use of force, sanctions and enforcement measures. Furthermore, the injudicious use of Chapter VII creates the wrong impression that non-Chapter VII resolutions are somehow not equally binding. That, in our view, has damaged efforts for pacific settlement under Chapter VI. Experience has shown that Chapter VII measures are not always ideal and may further worsen and complicate disputes. On the other hand, Chapter VI measures seek to resolve disputes in a manner that is harmonious and cost-effective. That builds confidence and fosters respect

for the sovereignty of Member States, leading to long-term and sustainable solutions.

Member States therefore need to invest more in mechanisms for pacific settlement, promoting and preserving peace, based at all times on the principles of justice and international law.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): At the outset, I wish to commend you, Mr. President, for organizing today's important debate. I am sure that this meeting, under your able guidance, will be fruitful. This important subject continues to deserve our serious attention.

Mediation is built upon a culture of dialogue, an essential ingredient in growing the culture of peace. It is anchored in emphatic listening and mutual communication, rather than in deafening silence and lingering prejudice. It is also inclusive, incorporating the views of all parties for a comprehensive approach to a conflict.

In reality, hostile parties often have a hard time talking to each other, let alone making peace. Therefore, the call for a mediator can undoubtedly become urgent. The confidence placed by the disputants in the mediator is of primary importance, and thus the selection of an appropriate mediator is crucial.

A successful mediation often begins in the absence of ceremonial episodes and formal procedure. Informality is often key to the building of confidence among parties and promotes a more candid approach. This can yield the most suitable solution possible, given the reality of the constraints experienced by the parties. The core process of mediation often needs to be away from the spotlight of the media. In short, time, trust and knowledge, as well as adequate logistical backup, are critical if a mediator is to be successful.

The United Nations has been one of the largest generators of mediation initiatives. We commend the actions undertaken by the Secretary-General in establishing a Mediation Support Unit within a short period of time and with strong support from Member States. The Unit has become a practical tool for supporting the good offices and mediation efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations.

Thus, Indonesia welcomes the recommendation that the Organization and Member States build local, national and regional capacity for mediation. That is why we attach great importance to a more strategic discussion on the establishment of a clearer framework within which the Secretary-General can assist them.

Regional organizations can play a meaningful and effective role in mediation. It is paramount, then, that the United Nations and regional organizations team up in mediation efforts. While the United Nations has the requisite resources and experience, a regional organization carries with it local content and has an equal chance for success in mediation. The African Union, the Organization of American States and the European Union, to name just a few, are notable mediators.

In South-East Asia, Indonesia, for its part, has worked together with the rest of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) family to establish a Charter that will serve as the legal and institutional framework for ASEAN. In the Charter, ASEAN sets out the fundamental principle of reliance on the peaceful settlement of disputes. ASEAN member States will endeavour to peacefully resolve all disputes in a timely manner through dialogue, consultation and negotiation. At the same time, the ASEAN Charter also provides that ASEAN member States that are parties to a dispute may at any time agree to resort to good offices, conciliation or mediation. It clearly stresses the importance of mediation as one of the preferable modes of peaceful dispute settlement.

Indonesia is not only committed to mediation, but is also a passionate advocate of mediation, for we too have reaped the benefits of successful mediation in resolving conflict situations within our own borders. Others in our region and beyond have shown interest in drawing upon those experiences.

As a final point, I should like to say that our experiences have taught us one important lesson: mediation does work. Mediation support efforts should be responsive to the demands of fast-moving peace processes. Therefore, our need for that peaceful means will remain in the future. Indonesia welcomes efforts to further explore ways and means to reinforce the Council's contributions to the promotion of mediation as an important and cost-effective means of dispute settlement.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan). At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and the Secretary-General for his report on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189), which makes a useful contribution to addressing the challenges faced in providing mediation assistance.

A number of mediation efforts have been successfully undertaken. They have helped to reduce tensions and ensured that peace processes moved forward. Both the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements play an important role in helping to mediate conflicts.

At the same time, despite the relevant binding provisions set forth in the United Nations Charter, we continue to face inconsistent behaviour that undermines the basic elements of the international legal order, threatens the integrity and stability of States and leads to grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The ongoing armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has resulted in the occupation of almost one fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan and has made approximately one out of every eight persons in the country an internally displaced person or refugee. Although the mediation efforts that have already been carried out for quite a long period of time within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have not always been consistent and have yet to yield results, Azerbaijan continues to be committed to resolving the conflict by political means and in a constructive manner. The conflict can be solved only on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan.

In order to ensure the success of the settlement process and mediation efforts, the factor of military occupation must be removed from the conflict settlement context and Armenia must completely withdraw from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Delaying the return of the territories could complicate the already difficult settlement process. Following the liberation of the occupied territories, internally displaced persons should return in safety and dignity to their places of origin in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and adjacent districts. Upon the release of the territories of Azerbaijan from occupation, the rehabilitation and economic development of the region shall take place and all communication technologies there shall be made available for mutual use.

The aforementioned understanding, reflected also in General Assembly resolution 62/243 of 14 March 2008, is an expression of the constructive compromise that Azerbaijan is ready to make within the framework of international law and with a view to achieving lasting peace, stability and cooperation. It is obvious at the same time that the success of the settlement process will depend on a constructive approach on the part of both sides, as well as on the active contribution of the international community and mediators.

However, it is very difficult to hope for a substantial breakthrough on the basis of the position that Armenia persists in holding. It is more than clear that Armenia is seeking to achieve a transfer of sovereignty over Azerbaijani territories that it seized through military force and in which it carried out ethnic cleansing. It is precisely for the purpose of annexation that Armenia wants to retain control over Nagorny Karabakh and some other occupied districts of Azerbaijan, prevent the displaced Azerbaijani population from returning to their homes and thus exclude equal consideration of the opinions of both communities.

Armenia openly disregards the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly, refuses to recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, is building up its military presence in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, and is thus clearly demonstrating its annexationist intentions. The approach of Armenia is unconstructive and unrealistic; it cannot serve as a sound basis for resolving the conflict and has led to the further prolongation of the settlement process.

While committed to the peaceful settlement of the conflict, Azerbaijan will never compromise its territorial integrity.

Mediation is a diverse and complex process that is influenced by the specific conditions brought by the parties involved into the conflict management system. Success depends on a number of critical factors, among them the need to ensure that the behavioural parameters of mediators are based on the normative standards set by the Charter of the United Nations and international law and on the objective of the

comprehensive settlement of conflicts. Therefore, the resolution of outstanding conflicts requires the joint and committed efforts of the international community as a whole. An ambiguous approach inevitably serves to generate mutual suspicion and mistrust and to reinforce perceptions of the centrality of military strength; as a result, it contributes to further escalation and destabilization, with unpredictable consequences.

There can be no justification for attempts to make participation in peace processes conditional on demands for immunity from responsibility. In that sense, the Security Council has an important role to play in all stages of the conflict. It should be better understood that acting in contravention of international law, undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and ignoring Security Council resolutions that explicitly condemn such behaviour may be hazardous and seen as shifting gears towards a more determinative decision.

Furthermore, it is clear that there can be no long-term and sustainable peace without justice. Therefore, ending impunity is essential to enhancing not only State responsibility and individual criminal liability for serious international crimes, but also peace, truth, reconciliation and the rights of victims.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): The Azerbaijani statement came as no surprise to my delegation. However, I will not engage in long polemics with the representative of our neighbouring State. The situation prevailing today was created by Azerbaijan, which two decades ago attempted to resolve the Nagorny Karabakh conflict by military force, obviously with unexpected consequences for itself. My delegation has had a number of opportunities in the past to provide conclusive information on the Nagorny Karabakh problem, and we do not think it would be appropriate to repeat our arguments here once again. However, I deem it necessary to reiterate that the Armenian side strongly believes that the fundamental resolution of the problem must be achieved on the basis of a comprehensive political settlement, taking into account the right of people to self-determination and a security guarantee for the people and population of Nagorny Karabakh.

I join my colleagues in thanking the Secretary-General for providing us with his in-depth analysis of the international mediation practices of the United Nations. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his concise and thorough presentation of the report (S/2009/189), which deals with an issue with which he is very familiar from his personal professional experience in the South Caucasus.

Despite the efforts of international community, inter- and intra-State conflicts are still threatening peace and security in different parts of the world. The United Nations Charter requires Member States to settle their disputes by peaceful means. There is no doubt that, among the various instruments the Charter offers to that end, mediation has proven to be the most promising one.

Undoubtedly, the success of any mediation is critically dependent on the selection of mediators, mechanisms for bringing the positions of the conflicting parties into alignment, and instruments to implement the agreed decisions.

Without questioning the importance of the United Nations in that regard, I concur with those of my colleagues who have stressed the key role of regional organizations as the most appropriate mediators. Shortly after the creation of the United Nations, international developments led to the formation of various regional initiatives and organizations. It became obvious that the international community needed a number of organizations to address the challenges arising in different regions. These organizations have been extremely instrumental in handling regional problems and mediating the settlement of disputes.

Among them, the largest regional security organization in the world — the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe — holds a special place. It operates on the basis of the fundamental principle of consensus, which distinguishes favourably it from other international forums. We strongly believe that only consensus among the concerned parties can lead to a genuine compromise and guarantee a lasting and durable solution to disputes. We maintain that only after that regional organization has brokered a political settlement through its mandated representatives should the United Nations, with its well-established mechanisms, resources and expertise, lead the implementation process to ensure the successful fulfilment of the agreements reached.

If that does not occur, one should not be surprised when attempts to impose conflict settlement formulas from the existing negotiation format through decisions taken by a simple majority of votes not only prove ineffective, but may jeopardize a fragile peace and ongoing talks.

The next important issue to which I would like to call the Council's attention is confidence-building policies and the essential role that mediators can play in this regard. It is widely recognized that, regardless of the format and mechanisms of international mediation, agreements reached hardly have a chance to be successfully implemented without a proper level of trust and confidence among the conflicting parties. Regrettably, despite its importance, this issue does not receive due attention in the report.

In conclusion, the Armenian delegation expresses its appreciation to the Mexican presidency for organizing this open debate. It gave us an opportunity to present our views on the important issue of mediation and settlement of disputes, and we hope that our positions will be duly considered on relevant occasions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month of April. I also thank you for organizing this meeting on such an important and vital subject. We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/189), which has given us a thorough analysis of the importance of mediation activities. We recognize that the report was requested by the Security Council last September, a fact that underscores the importance the Council is placing on mediation in its overall responsibility for maintaining international peace and security in the continuum of prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General in establishing the Mediation Support Unit and urge continued support to it by the Council and all other Member States, in terms of both financial and human resources. It is also important that the work of the Unit continue to be coordinated within the Department of Political Affairs to ensure coherence and coordination. We also call upon the involvement of more women to support mediation work in the Secretariat and the field, pursuant to resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

The role of mediation in the overall architecture of international peace and security is now getting the attention it deserves in relation to other aspects of the equation, especially peacekeeping and humanitarian response. Of course, more needs to be done by focusing appropriate attention on the three distinct but related areas of mediation.

Mediation has a crucial role to play in preventing the outbreak of conflicts through the timely defusing of simmering tensions, as indicated by early warning systems, if they are in place. Mediation must therefore be linked with early warning mechanisms at all levels: national, regional and international.

The second area of mediation is in securing the cessation of hostilities and negotiating ceasefires and peace agreements. This role has been the most prevalent and has been closely related to the work of the Security Council, as it entails the eventual deployment of peacekeeping missions. Experience has shown that this stage demands coordinated action between the Security Council, the good offices of the Secretary-General and regional and local actors. The framework for this coordinated action needs to be strengthened through political action and capacity-building.

Mediation should also follow through on the implementation of peace agreements. Several peace agreements have faltered before being implemented or have stalled and fallen apart halfway through the implementation stage. Mediators with different abilities and sometimes in different combinations have to intervene to shore up peace processes and put them back on track. The Security Council has to be actively engaged and must provide its needed leadership and political leverage to rescue and resuscitate peace processes where such faltering is taking place.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, there has been a new peace agreement between the Government and the Congrès national pour la défense du people. In Darfur, there is a need to negotiate a new peace agreement. We have witnessed several peace agreements in several situations within ongoing peace processes where the Security Council has already deployed peacekeeping mission. Mediators with different skills and backgrounds may be needed to continue negotiating as the need arises within a single

peace process where several peace agreements may be needed, involving different mediators.

The third area is related to mediators in situations where they are acting as reserves or facilitators in the process of peacebuilding, as in Burundi currently. This takes the form of efforts to create favourable environments for reconciliation, political accommodation and related tasks to prevent post-conflict situations from relapsing into conflict.

These are all different variations of mediation tasks, which the Secretariat and the Security Council need to develop and put into the form of workable tools within the United Nations and in partnership with regional organizations.

Tanzania has, over the years, built experience in mediation and peace facilitation in East and Central Africa. We have seen gaps that need to be filled by strengthening institutional links between the Security Council and regional and subregional institutions in conflict resolution. The work of the Council would be greatly improved and strengthened if the United Nations were to invest more in political partnerships with regional organizations, such as the African Union, which are equipped to face the political challenges and opportunities and which need to be supported by the Council and the Secretary-General.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation congratulates you sincerely, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We also express our appreciation to the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, who did a commendable job this past month as President.

There is no doubt that mediation is a powerful instrument for the positive transformation of relations between the parties to a dispute, and one that makes it possible to avoid the escalation of armed violence. Burkina Faso, which is making an outstanding contribution to mediation in Africa, has quite rightly made the promotion of mediation a priority during its term on the Security Council.

Today's debate is of particular interest to Benin, since we have made dialogue the cement that reinforces, day after day, the building of our young democracy, which came into being at the memorable national conference of February 1990. That exceptional forum dedicated to national reconciliation was made possible thanks to the masterful mediation of the local Catholic Church.

Governments of Benin since 1991 have striven to maintain special channels of cooperation within and between national democratic institutions and among social partners to avoid or contain tensions that could escalate.

In recent years, the political landscape in Benin has been enriched by two new national institutions. The Presidential Mediation Body, which is associated with the presidency of the Republic, is responsible for settling disputes between citizens and the administration at the national and local levels. The High Council on Cooperative Governance seeks consensus-based solutions to challenges confronting the country. Its purpose is to consolidate the direction of the nation's governance in an environment of peace and concord in order to perpetuate the legacy of the national conference of February 1990 by managing public affairs in a participatory manner.

At the subregional level, Benin participates in efforts undertaken in the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture, which includes functioning mediation mechanisms. Inter alia, it has placed its national competencies at the service of the African Union Panel of the Wise and the Economic Community of West African States. Two high-profile women from Benin are members of those mediation boards. Benin is currently presiding over the Association of Mediators of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, comprising French-speaking States of the subregion.

At the global level, Benin has helped to revive the international community's interest in mediation, and above all in the critical role of the Security Council in that field, by implementing resolution 1625 (2005), adopted on 14 September 2005, which includes explicit provisions on mediation and preventive diplomacy. We recall that the Secretary-General submitted a very instructive report (S/2008/18) in January 2008 on efforts made pursuant to resolution 1625 (2005). Benin welcomes the significant progress made since then in the capacity-building of the United Nations, and in particular of the Department of Political Affairs, in the field of mediation support, which is also covered by the report before us today

(S/2009/189), which is a useful complement to the aforementioned report.

Benin welcomes the Secretary-General's proposal to act on the United Nations commitment to developing mediation. The importance of the Secretary-General's report lies in particular in the fact that he highlights lessons learned from the practice of mediation, as well as steps taken or to be taken to meet challenges to the efficacy of the international community's conflict prevention efforts. My delegation feels that the stress placed on the quality of the human resources required is fully justified, particularly with respect to the need to train new staff capable of meeting any challenge.

The United Nations should endorse the African Union's 2002 appeal to all its members to develop mechanisms for the pacific settlement of disputes. In that respect, development assistance funds and programmes should lend effective support to the capacity-building efforts of national and regional mediation institutions.

It is important effectively to promote strong partnership based on subsidiarity and the comparative advantages of stakeholders so that the Security Council can exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It must be able to use appropriately the instruments available to it, including sanctions. In that way, it can help proactively to create the conditions for the rational and cost-effective management of uncertain situations and crises in order to ensure post-conflict peacebuilding if violence has unavoidably escalated.

In sum, Benin supports the Secretary-General's recommendations on the capacity-building of regional and subregional organizations and other agents for mediation and conflict settlement and prevention. Accordingly, the United Nations system should act in a concerted and coherent manner, in particular to ensure the structural and systematic prevention of conflicts that will allow it resolutely to address the elimination of the underlying causes of conflict, endogenous and exogenous alike. The primary goal is to build a world driven by the culture of peace and the virtues of dialogue at the service of the stability of countries and the promotion of universal well-being.

In conclusion, my delegation associates itself with the presidential statement to be adopted at the end of this meeting.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. As a seasoned diplomat from a friendly country, you and I speak in many of the same forums and share many qualities and aspirations to peace, stability and development. Your convening of today's debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes attests to your profound interest in the problems and concerns of the developing countries, in particular those in Africa. You are thereby building on the pioneering initiative of Burkina Faso in organizing, in September 2008, the first high-level exchange of views on this extremely important subject under its own presidency of the Security Council.

I hope that today's deliberations will identify an objective, mandatory approach stressing the absolute priority of eliminating the underlying causes and origins of conflict through effective mediation and the overall political settlement of disputes, strongly and seriously supported by the Security Council and the international community, and in particular by relevant international and regional partners. The Security Council will thereby be in a position to best discharge its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security by ensuring stability and long-term security, pursuant to its mandate and the provisions of paragraph 3 of Article 2, and Articles 3, 33 and 36 of the United Nations Charter.

We support the statement delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The founding fathers of the United Nations were well aware more than six decades ago that peace must be established before it can be maintained. They were convinced that international peace and security can be best safeguarded through the peaceful and political settlement of disputes. The Charter reaffirms the United Nations key role in mediation efforts and in peacebuilding. The role of the Security Council should not be limited to dispatching peacekeeping missions, which now number 18 staffed by more than 100,000 personnel. That is a heavy burden on resources, especially in consideration of the current global economic and financial crisis.

The Security Council must therefore work tirelessly to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes. Regardless of the independence, impartiality, objectivity and expertise of mediators, all influential parties, in particular the Security Council and the regional and subregional organizations directly involved with the parties to a conflict, must contribute to the solution. It goes without saying that the Council's adoption of neutral and impartial positions vis-à-vis the parties to a conflict remains the keystone to resolving conflicts.

Given their direct links to the geopolitical, cultural and social aspects of conflicts, regional and subregional organizations are best placed to undertake mediation efforts, particularly since modern conflicts among and within States are becoming increasingly complex. The intervention of regional and subregional organizations therefore provides added value, particularly when they attach great importance to the political settlement of conflicts. The Constitutive Act of the African Union stresses the importance of the pacific settlement of disputes and of preventing them before they erupt. Given the United Nations cumulative experience in this area, we reaffirm its role in supporting regional mediation efforts, in particular by lending technical and logistical support and required expertise.

The political settlement of conflicts requires the promotion and activation of the role of the United Nations and of its competent bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the relevant funds and agencies, in order to build the national capacities of States and help them reach the Millennium Development Goals by supporting national projects for development, reconstruction and economic recovery, transfer of technology, and the fight against climate change and environmental degradation, because development remains a decisive factor for building lasting peace.

Indeed, addressing the root causes of conflicts is the best way to ensure lasting peace and the avoidance of a return to war. Moreover, the promotion of the United Nations conflict prevention capacity will undoubtedly make it possible to make considerable savings in the exorbitant cost of peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, we would like to recall something that we have consistently reiterated in the Council on many occasions before: the Darfur conflict in our country could not have endured so long had the Security Council at the very outset brought its full weight to bear to support the political settlement efforts, particularly because there was a strong national will to turn the page in this conflict. That will was shown recently in the national comprehensive integrated plan adopted through decisions and recommendations of the Sudan People's Forum. That initiative laid the foundation for international and regional efforts to bring about an immediate, comprehensive and just peace in Darfur. We stress in particular the promising efforts of the African-Arab initiative led by the State of Qatar in coordination and cooperation with the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassolé.

Furthermore, armed movements that have continued to boycott the peace process would not have been able to continue to reject the peace option if the Security Council had carried out its role by sending the right messages to the leaders of those movements. Those movements would not have stayed away from the peace process were it not for the attitude of certain influential Powers which had sent them the wrong message by closing their eyes to their excesses and even welcoming their leaders.

Everyone knows that the hasty, ill-considered decision by the International Criminal Court had negative results. The first one was the announcement by certain armed movements that they were going to boycott the political process. One might have hoped that the Security Council would have protected the political process against such risks and dangers. Thus, we wish to reaffirm that the credibility of the Security Council and the fact that it has chosen peace and stability in the Sudan should impel the Council to definitively reject all of these risky and ill-considered ventures and to rectify the situation by exerting pressure on the rebel movements so that a peaceful political solution can be found, one that can give the people of the Sudan stability and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): After consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 23 September 2008 (S/PRST/2008/36) and takes note of the report of

the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities (S/2009/189), as well as the recommendations contained therein.

"The Security Council, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and as the organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, underscores its intention to remain engaged in all stages of the conflict cycle, including in support of mediation, and expresses its readiness to explore further ways and means to reinforce the promotion of mediation as an important means for the pacific settlement of disputes, wherever possible before they evolve into violence.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of mediation, to be launched at the earliest possible phases of conflicts, as well as in the implementation phases of signed peace agreements and underlines the need to design mediation processes that address the root causes of conflicts and contribute to peacebuilding, in order to ensure sustainable peace.

"The Security Council stresses that the principal responsibility for the peaceful settlement of disputes rests with the parties to the conflict and that it is only through their full participation and genuine commitment to resolve the conflict, including its underlying causes, that peace can be achieved and sustained. In this regard, the Council underlines the importance of building national and local capacity for mediation.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of the actions undertaken by the United Nations Secretary-General in promoting mediation and in the pacific settlement of disputes and welcomes the continued efforts by the Department of Political Affairs, in particular through the Mediation Support Unit, to respond to emerging and existing crises. It underscores that mediation support efforts should be responsive to the demands of fast-moving peace processes.

"The Security Council recalls the important contribution of Member States, regional and subregional organizations, civil society and other stakeholders to the pacific settlement of disputes. The Council welcomes the efforts made by regional and subregional organizations to enhance their mediation role and appreciates the efforts of the Secretary-General to continue to assist them in this regard.

"The Security Council urges the Secretariat to work with all partners to ensure the availability of well-trained, experienced and geographically diverse mediation experts at all levels to ensure the timely and highest-quality support to mediation efforts, and it urges those possessing cadres of mediation experts to cooperate with the Secretariat in this endeavour.

"The Security Council further requests the Secretary-General to work in partnership with Member States, regional and subregional organizations and other relevant partners in a coordinated and mutually complementary manner when cooperating in a mediation process.

"The Security Council notes with concern the very low numbers of women in formal roles in mediation processes and stresses the need to ensure that women are appropriately appointed at decision-making levels, as high-level mediators and within the composition of the mediators' teams in line with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). It reiterates its call to the Secretary-General and the heads of regional and subregional organizations to take the appropriate measures to that end.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to keep it informed of the action undertaken by him in promoting and supporting mediation and pacific settlement of disputes, ensuring coherence with the ongoing efforts to strengthen peacebuilding and peacekeeping."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2009/8.

I thank all delegations for participating in today's discussion.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6109

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 April 2009

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 6109th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 22 April 2009, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 22 April 2009, the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B, held its 6109th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara.

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Weisbrod-Weber and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views."

09-30950 (E) 220409

Please recycle

United Nations S/PV.6110

Security Council

Distr.: General
23 April 2009

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 6110th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 23 April 2009, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 23 April 2009, the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B, held its 6110th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in the Sudan.

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Qazi and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views."

09-31189 (E) 230409

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Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6111th meeting

Friday, 24 April 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Manana
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2009/199)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

09-31234 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2009/199)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Central African Republic, Chad and the Czech Republic, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) and Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) took seats at the Council table; Mr. Palouš (Czech Republic) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/199, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad. I should also like to draw the attention of members to photocopies of a letter dated 21 April 2009 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the two reports on the activities of the European Union military operation in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2009/214.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I now give the floor.

Mr. Mulet (*spoke in French*): I thank members for the opportunity to update them on the situation in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic. The Council has before it the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) (S/2009/199), which contains comprehensive information about the situation. I should like to take this opportunity to highlight several points of special interest and to inform members about several key developments that have occurred since the issuance of the Secretary-General's report, in particular concerning force generation and the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS).

As members are aware, MINURCAT, which took over from the European Union-led military force (EUFOR) on 15 March 2009, is a new force. It has benefited from the decision of several countries that have contributed troops to EUFOR to extend the deployment of their troops under MINURCAT. In addition, several other Member States, including Ghana and Togo, were also able to deploy troops before the transfer of authority between EUFOR and MINURCAT on 15 March. Thanks to those contributions, MINURCAT's force numbered 2,085 troops when authority was transferred and 2,425 on 22 April.

Despite those auspicious beginnings, there is now an urgent need to reinforce MINURCAT up to its authorized strength and to equip it to meet the challenges facing it. As a result, we are concerned by the difficulties that we have encountered in the area of force generation. In a context of strong global demand, MINURCAT had only an extremely brief window of time between the Council's authorization of the force and the transfer of authority; the troop-contributing countries had only two months to prepare.

Thus, Ghana recently indicated that it would not be able to deploy a full battalion to Farchana by 15 May, as initially planned, because of delays in acquiring equipment for the contingent. Ghana will be able to deploy only a vanguard of 200 troops by mid-May; the remaining 600 troops will deployed by October. Moreover, the Nepalese battalion, which will constitute the reserve force in Abéché, will be able to deploy only 285 troops before the rainy season begins, also because of delays in acquiring equipment for the contingent.

In his report, the Secretary-General foresees a progressive strengthening of MINURCAT's force from 2,085 troops on 15 March to 3,845 by the end of June, to reach its full strength of 5,200 by the end of 2009. Regrettably, we are now obliged to make a number of adjustments following the delays to which I have just referred. When the rainy season begins at the end of June, MINURCAT's force strength will probably be approximately 3,000 troops, with units present in all sectors and a small reserve force in Abéché. We expect that, with the full deployment of contingents later in the year, the force's strength will reach 4,700 troops by the end of 2009. We will reach the ceiling of 5,200 troops only if Member States provide the Mission with military helicopters and their support elements.

That leads me to the second difficulty, which we must overcome as soon as possible: the lack of elements essential to the force, particularly a communications unit in Abéché and most of the military helicopters required. Currently, we have received offers of only six military helicopters, including four Mi-8s provided by the Russian Federation; 12 more helicopters are still needed. It has also been difficult to operationalize the helicopters that we already have. Those four helicopters can be used for operations only with the written agreement of the troop contributor. We are trying to obtain such authorization as swiftly as possible. In addition, although Uruguay has pledged to provide two helicopters, that commitment must still be approved by the Uruguayan parliament.

I cannot stress strongly enough the risk posed by the lack of military helicopters to the operational effectiveness of the force. The concept of operations provides for the presence of military helicopters with the capacity to carry out both day and night operations, to ensure that the force has the required mobility, capacity to project and deterrent force 24 hours a day. The Mission's civilian helicopters have a capacity that is limited to medical evacuations and providing support to patrols as a result of restrictions concerning night operations and the need for prior approval regarding their landing sites.

Furthermore, although MINURCAT is capable of conducting an average of 15 ground patrols per day, these are currently limited in duration and scope, as longer patrols require reliable and effective air support to guarantee medical evacuation capacity. I would therefore like to call upon the members of the Security Council to do everything within their power to ensure that MINURCAT has the military helicopters required to implement its mandate and to minimize the risks facing the Mission's troops.

It is all the more urgent to strengthen MINURCAT given the security, political and humanitarian challenges described the report of the Secretary-General. At the political level, there has been little progress in the implementation of the political processes under way in Chad and between Chad and the Sudan. The implementation of the 13 August 2007 agreement between the Chadian Government and the political opposition is currently deadlocked as a result of disagreement regarding the electoral law. The troops of the armed Chadian opposition remain outside the process and continue to consolidate their forces in western Darfur. On the Chadian side of the border, Chadian National Armed Forces have also strengthened their positions, and the climate is tense.

In such a context, relations between the Sudan and Chad remain difficult. I hope that the Contact Group for the 13 March 2008 Dakar agreement between Chad and the Sudan will be able to meet again in the near future. I would like to encourage the members of the Council to use their influence to re-launch the Dakar process and to prompt the Government of Chad, the political opposition and the armed opposition groups to make more progress in moving towards lasting and inclusive peace in Chad. In this regard, the Secretary-General welcomes the efforts of Libya and Qatar.

In the absence of political reconciliation, especially in Darfur, the humanitarian situation remains particularly difficult. As the Secretary-General indicates in his report, 250,000 Sudanese refugees, 160,000 internally displaced persons and 700,000 among the local population in the east of Chad are

dependent on humanitarian assistance. In March, 15 non-governmental organizations wrote to the Government of Chad to express their concern regarding the security situation, which, according to them, is currently deteriorating. They cited the great number of incidents of banditry and armed attacks against humanitarian personnel.

Beyond the zone of responsibility of MINURCAT, in eastern Chad, other developments are also ground for concern. A meningitis epidemic has developed in the country, with 914 cases counted by the World Health Organization as of 15 April. In southern Chad, the ongoing flow of refugees from the Central African Republic into the Salamat region was the result of clashes between Central African Armed Forces and rebel factions in the north of the country. Between mid-January and 19 April, 17,621 new refugees were counted in a number of sites near the border, where they have been receiving assistance from the humanitarian community since February. Access to these sites, however, is difficult and will be even more so after the start of the rainy season.

(*spoke in English*)

Given the lack of security in eastern Chad, MINURCAT support to the Chadian community police force known as the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS), which provides law and order in refugee camps and other humanitarian sites, is particularly critical. The 850-strong DIS is now fully trained, and 775 officers are deployed across eastern Chad, a significant achievement on the part of MINURCAT and the Government. But the DIS is a very new body and needs to be further consolidated and guided to carry out its vital functions in a manner consistent with its concept of operations. This is made clear by recent incidents of DIS ill-discipline, notably the alleged murder of a civilian by a DIS commander in Farchana on 22 March. We are working with the Government of Chad to ensure that DIS posts are equipped with gun safes and weapons storage facilities, where the weapons of off-duty DIS officers would be kept. We are also encouraged that the Chadian authorities have submitted this case to the judicial system.

In a further troubling incident, DIS officers themselves came under attack on 15 April, when a group of around 25 armed individuals attacked the DIS station in Farchana and stole a number of weapons, as well as ammunition, communications equipment and personal belongings. A DIS officer and a security guard were injured. Information gathered by a MINURCAT fact-finding team suggests that the attackers may have been military elements. The Government of Chad has also launched an investigation into the incident.

The events just described highlight two different problems: cases of ill-discipline and the vulnerability of the DIS to attacks. In our response to these problems, we must strike a balance between maintaining the credibility and safety of the DIS and the need for the contingent to retain the trust of those it is intended to support, namely internally displaced persons, refugees, the local population and the humanitarian community. Following the attack on the DIS of 15 April and given the current lack of law and order in eastern Chad, the Government of Chad has proposed to equip the DIS with AK-47 submachine guns. This proposal requires careful consideration in order to ensure that the DIS maintains its community policing character, consistent with the concept endorsed by the Council in resolution 1778 (2007) of 25 September 2007.

In the coming weeks, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will conduct a midterm review of the DIS, in cooperation with other departments and United Nations agencies. The review will take stock of the concept and performance of the DIS, including the issues I have just described, as well as the impact of United Nations support and the way forward. We will also assess the funding situation and means of increasing international support for the DIS and broader rule-of-law efforts by MINURCAT in eastern Chad. It is vital that we match the deployment of the DIS with corresponding progress in the areas of judicial and penal reform and respect for human rights, and I encourage Council members and donors to support these needs through the Trust Fund for the Support of the Activities of MINURCAT.

As outlined in the report, significant efforts were made during the reporting period to put in place the necessary legal and administrative arrangements for the deployment of MINURCAT's military component. As the Council is aware, on 13 February the United Nations and the Government of Chad signed a memorandum of understanding on the transfer of sites and infrastructure. In accordance with that agreement, MINURCAT is working to build new airport parking spaces as quickly as possible. Following a recent Government request that MINURCAT provide prior

notification of its aviation parking needs, we have reiterated that the memorandum of understanding provides for unimpeded access to the two airport parking spaces in N'Djamena and Abéché.

Unfortunately, certain legal arrangements are yet to be finalized, including amendments to the Status of Mission Agreements to reflect the military component of MINURCAT. We have called upon the Governments of Chad and the Central African Republic to conclude these amendments, which were submitted to them in draft form on 3 and 18 March, respectively. We also look forward to the finalization of memorandums of understanding with Libya and Cameroon to provide for the transit of goods through their territories, which are currently under discussion with both Governments.

Finally, further to the request of the Council, I am pleased to report that the Mission is developing a strategic workplan, including mechanisms to measure and track progress on the implementation of MINURCAT's benchmarks. The plan is expected to be finalized by July 2009 and will be presented in outline form in the next report of the Secretary-General on MINURCAT. I would like to reiterate, however, that achieving the benchmarks endorsed by the Council — including the voluntary return and resettlement of internally displaced persons, the demilitarization of refugee and internally displaced person camps, and improvement in the capacity of Chadian authorities to provide security with respect for human rights in eastern Chad — will require broad efforts involving many actors. In particular, we will continue to rely on the support of the Council to ensure that MINURCAT has the military assets and political support necessary to carry out its very important mandate.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Mulet for his briefing. I now give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Palouš (Czech Republic): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

Let me begin by expressing our appreciation for having been invited to participate in today's meeting on behalf of the European Union. I would like to thank Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his briefing.

The European Union-led military force (EUFOR) in Chad and the Central African Republic was a success story and proof of exemplary cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the United Nations, from the launching of the operation to its successful handover on 15 March 2009. The European Union provided a bridging military arrangement in the region, pending the deployment of a United Nations force, for a period of one year.

It is my honour to briefly introduce the report of the European Union requested under Security Council resolution 1778 (2007) of 25 September 2007. This is the second of the two reports on the operations and on the fulfilment of the EUFOR mandate requested by the Security Council, and covers the final six-month period from its full operating capability on 15 September 2008 to the mandate handover to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) on 15 March 2009. As Council members will remember, the first report was delivered by Secretary-General/High Representative Javier Solana on 24 September 2008.

Throughout its mandate, EUFOR made a tangible contribution towards protecting civilians in danger and, in particular, refugees and displaced persons who have been profoundly affected by the crisis in the region. During the reporting period, it conducted over 2300 short-range patrols in the areas of the main internally displaced persons sites and refugee camps, and over 260 long-range patrols in order to affirm its presence in other areas as well. EUFOR activities also included active engagement with humanitarian actors. The force integrated human rights issues and the protection of women and children in armed conflicts into its conduct of the operation, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions.

Beyond its mandate, EUFOR provided medical care for the local population. It also facilitated the removal of unexploded ordnance devices, thus contributing to the safety of the local population, and extracted humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) personnel from Ouandjia in the Central African Republic in November 2008. Throughout its mandate, EUFOR acted in an impartial, neutral and independent manner and was recognized as such by all actors.

EUFOR's engagement with MINURCAT was highly significant from the beginning of the operation and was further intensified as the handover approached. EUFOR assisted MINURCAT with facilitation and the development of capabilities to train and deploy the United Nations-trained Chadian Détachement intégré de sécurité officers. EUFOR established infrastructure, including six spacious and fully fledged military compounds in theatre, that were transferred to Chad and onwards to MINURCAT at the end of its mandate, thus setting the ground for the deployment of the United Nations follow-on force.

EUFOR, EU members and other EUFOR troop-contributing countries contributed in many other ways to the transfer of authority to MINURCAT that took place on 15 March 2009, including through early planning, support to MINURCAT and the re-hatting of an important part of the EUFOR contingents, which made up most of MINURCAT's strength at the date of the transfer of authority.

The European Union welcomes the holding of the inclusive political dialogue in the Central African Republic and stresses the need to keep this new momentum. The EU is concerned about the recent spate of violence in the North of the country. All groups concerned must refrain from the use of violence. In Chad, where the fragile situation also contributed to slowing down progress on the overall political agenda, the EU continues to actively encourage the political process in the framework of the 13 August 2007 agreement in the context of preparations for the legislative elections.

The EU also accords great importance to the amelioration of relations between the Sudan and Chad in order to reduce tensions in the region and to contribute to a solution to the conflicts. In that regard, we hope that the next meeting of the Dakar Contact Group will take place shortly. The EU is concerned that the expulsion of a number of humanitarian organizations from Darfur and the subsequent reduced capacity to deliver humanitarian aid could raise the prospect of a large number of new refugees crossing the border into Chad.

The European Union would like to welcome the close cooperation with the United Nations at the Secretariat and field levels throughout the mandate of the European operation. In order to preserve the positive outcomes of EUFOR, the European Union would like to encourage the Secretariat and new troop-contributing countries to sustain their efforts towards a quick achievement of MINURCAT's full operational capability.

I would like to assure the Council that the European Union will remain active at the political and diplomatic level in Chad and in the Central African Republic. Although EUFOR's mandate has formally ended, the European Union will remain an active player in the region. Approximately 2,000 of the soldiers who participated in the European operation now serve under the MINURCAT banner, further underlining European support to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chad.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of the Council for the month of April. Allow me also to greet the Assistant Secretary-General and to stress the great interest with which the Government of Chad heard his briefing. It is also my pleasure to welcome the statement of the Czech Republic presidency of the European Union and to express yet again the gratitude of my country to the European Union, which has responded to our expectations and those of the humanitarian community by protecting, in the best possible manner, the people affected by the insecurity in the eastern part of our country. On 15 March, the authority of European Union-led (EUFOR) military force in Chad and the Central African Republic was transferred to the United Nations, to the satisfaction of all. We are pleased to note the acknowledgement by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2009/199) of the cooperation of the Chadian Government, which allowed the transfer of authority to take place in the best possible conditions. We reiterate our willingness to pursue that cooperation with the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) so that it may effectively accomplish its mandate in the East of our country.

Turning to the report of the Secretary-General, my Government has instructed me to make some observations.

We wish to reassure the Secretary-General of Chad's unwavering will to resolve its internal problems. That is why we cannot understand why it is

stressed in paragraph 62 of the report that implementation of the political agreement of 13 August 2007 has reached an impasse. Unfortunately, some have been quick to bring up only that point of the report in order to dramatize the political situation in Chad. There have been difficulties, to be sure, but they have already been overcome thanks to the mediation of partners. A compromise was found between the parties on a parliamentary amendment of the statute of the National Independent Electoral Commission to ensure that its independence could not be contested. It must be recalled that the Commission's membership is based on parity — 15 members of the majority and 15 of the opposition, while its presiding officer must be appointed by consensus among all parties. All provisions have been made for the population census to begin on 20 May 2009 with a view to organizing free and transparent elections.

As for national reconciliation with the so-called political and military elements, the Government is doing its best to that end. Now that the implementation of the political agreement on the national issue to which I have just referred is on the right track, it is for those whom the report mistakenly refers to as armed opposition to renounce the use of force and to return to the country in compliance with the Sirte agreement of 25 October 2007, instead of rejecting it on the pretext of its supposed obsolescence. Those so-called opposition groups would thus contribute to consolidating the rule of democratic law, to which we expect them to display genuine commitment by adhering to the political agreement of 13 August 2007. Perhaps, however, we should not dream too much, since we know that they are not free to choose that route, which goes against the Machiavellian schemes of their patron. That is why we call them mercenaries paid by our neighbour, and not "opposition".

We are cheered by the reference in paragraph 13 of the report to the fact that they have "continued to consolidate in West Darfur near El Geneina", in the Sudan. That is why we have taken the military steps necessary to respond to any eventuality. We cannot be blamed for defending ourselves. However, not to draw undue attention to the situation, contrary to what the report says, the Chadian Minister for External Relations, Moussa Faki, at a meeting informed some diplomats of that, but individually and not all. I also alerted the Secretary-General, who sent his assistant responsible for peacekeeping operations to meet me.

We would also like to reassure the Secretary-General and the Security Council that taking measures to defend ourselves militarily does not obviate our determination to normalize our relations with our neighbour, the Sudan, with which we have historic, multifaceted and unavoidable neighbourly relations. That is why we reiterate our commitment to respecting the provisions of all peace agreements — from Tripoli to Dakar and Riyadh — that link us to those brother countries. We are ready, if it asks, to help the Sudan settle the Darfur crisis as we have in the past, before it betrays us by arming Chadians against its own rebellion and then against the legitimate institutions of the country. We hope that the Chadian-Sudanese peace talks, to be held soon in Doha, Qatar, will open the way for a true normalization of our relations.

Allow me also to refer to some specific points of the report.

With regard to the document establishing MINURCAT II, we cannot accept a document prepared in advance, a sort of ready-to-wear item that we are asked to take or leave. For our part, we propose that negotiations take place in N'Djamena between the competent authorities and the Secretariat to reach a legal and administrative agreement that takes into account the sovereignty and concerns of Chad, without of course losing sight of the model status-of-forces agreement annexed to the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/45/594.

Furthermore, the Chadian authorities deplore the fact that they did not know about the 15 patrols and military escorts that the report mentions in paragraph 28, since the MINURCAT liaison officer never mentioned such patrols during meetings of liaison officers, as the EUFOR liaison officer did in the past.

With regard to paragraph 34 of the report on the question of installing a VHF radio communications system, we do not understand the delay, since on 5 February 2009 we were promised that the communications system would be installed by the end of February. Since the communications system is still not operational, the patrol and escort missions of the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS) elements are handicapped because they are cut off from their base. Still with regard to the DIS, it should be noted that there are serious logistics difficulties, as paragraph 34 of the report stresses. It is particularly under-equipped in vehicles, although we had placed great hope in

logistics financing from the Trust Fund. It therefore seems to us untimely to suggest, as in paragraph 58 of the report, the transitioning of DIS from a donor-supported initiative to one financed by the Government of Chad. Is my Government not already making sufficient financial efforts ensuring the security of the border?

Moreover, unlike the indications of paragraph 49 of the report, the Chadian authorities are completely unaware of the onset of construction work for two new parking spaces at the airport of Abéché and the international airport in N'Djamena, which at present are completely overtaken by the military activities of the Chadian national army, the United Nations, and even Opération Épervier. It is absolutely necessary that the parking spaces at the airport of Abéché and the international airport in N'Djamena be built.

Finally, in general, there is a real need for consultation and close cooperation between MINURCAT and the Chadian authorities responsible for implementing the issues covered by the report in its sections IV B on justice and prisons, IV C on human rights, IV D on civil affairs and IV E on gender. The success of the Mission and the sovereignty of Chad depend on that.

All our observations have been made in a constructive spirit so that MINURCAT can deploy in eastern Chad taking into account the realities of the country. In other words, my country once again reiterates before the Security Council its willingness to cooperate fully and on a sound footing with the United Nations for the fulfilment of its noble mission to maintain peace and security in the region in general and in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic in particular.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking Mr. Edmond Mulet for his briefing and for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/199), which describes developments in the region, both in Chad and in the Central African Republic. My gratitude goes to the troops of the European Union-led military force (EUFOR) in Chad and the Central African Republic for their contribution to easing the tension in the subregion between certain rebel groups and the civilian population.

I wish to thank Mr. Mulet also for having sent a very strong signal to the Security Council: that the lack of military equipment now be taken seriously and that a solution be found quickly. In my view, if we genuinely wish to see stability in the political and security spheres, it is only proper that the Security Council should consider the matter, and should in particular take into account the human aspect, with civilians caught between rebel forces and loyalist forces defending the territory.

I believe that today's briefing and the report of the Secretary-General call on us all to find a concrete solution.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6112

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6112th meeting

Monday, 27 April 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Okuda
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Ilkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2009/201)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

09-31443 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2009/201)

The President (spoke in Spanish): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Rodolphe Adada, Joint African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur and head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Adada to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, which is contained in document S/2009/201.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Rodolphe Adada, on whom I now call.

Mr. Adada (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to address the Council at this critical moment in Darfur's history. In this briefing, I will provide the Council with an overview of the state of affairs in Darfur. As Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), I will provide an accurate picture of the progress we are making and of the obstacles we are encountering.

In terms of the political situation, the conflict in Darfur today is a conflict of everybody against everybody: Government forces against the armed movements, the armed movements among one another, Government forces against the militias and tribal groups against one another. There is also endemic banditry due to a breakdown in law and order. The UNAMID civilian protection strategy seeks to address every factor that poses a threat to innocent civilians.

Two risk factors stand out. The first is the risk posed by military operations, in particular those between the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Government of the Sudan. It is of vital importance that the Security Council send a clear signal to all parties that aggressive military action is unacceptable. The second risk factor is the worrisome state of relations between Chad and the Sudan. Indeed, the danger of a serious deterioration of the situation in Darfur cannot be ruled out.

Having said all that, the situation has changed from the intense period in 2003 and 2004, when tens of thousands of people were killed. Today, in purely numerical terms, the Darfur conflict can be considered a low-intensity conflict. During the period from the first day of UNAMID operations on 1 January 2008 until 31 March 2009, our incident database contains reports of just under 2,000 fatalities from violence, with a monthly average of about 130 to 150 deaths. Approximately one third of the victims were civilians.

Over the same period, 620 civilians lost their lives, either in deliberate attacks, in crossfire or in criminal attacks. Of those 620, 68 were internally displaced persons. According to our reports, 573 combatants died and 669 people died in tribal fighting. Last but not least, we regret to inform the Council of the loss of 14 of our own.

There is no military solution to the conflict in Darfur, which is a political conflict. It is important that the Council send a strong message to all the parties to speedily resume inclusive talks. Unfortunately, the political progress made in February with the first round of the Doha talks has not yet produced concrete results.

The political process in the Sudan has apparently frozen, in particular after the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue an arrest warrant for President Omer Al-Bashir. The ICC issue has dominated and polarized Sudanese political life. It has weakened the position of those in the Sudan who have been working for compromise and consensus and has encouraged militant sentiment on both sides. We need to find common ground and empower moderate

elements, civil society elements in particular, to defuse the tensions.

Although, unfortunately, the chances for a comprehensive ceasefire seem slim, a short-term cessation of hostilities between the parties is possible. UNAMID has repeatedly expressed its willingness to use everything at its disposal to monitor such a cessation of hostilities. We have drawn up action plans to that end. Comprehensive, fast, rigorous and credible monitoring of violent incidents, with immediate reporting to the Council and the African Union, would be an important step towards reducing tension and restoring confidence.

Lastly, we must never forget that Darfur is part of the Sudan and that a solution to the crisis in Darfur is part and parcel of the wider national Sudanese issue. Nor must we forget that the people of Darfur are Sudanese citizens who have the right to participate in the resolution of key national issues, such as the establishment of a democratically elected Government. Darfur should not hold the national democratization processes hostage, but neither should Darfurians be denied their democratic right to participate in shaping the future of the Sudan as a nation.

I would now like to address the humanitarian situation. At the beginning of this year, the humanitarian crisis in Darfur was, as a whole, contained. The supply of food, medical care and other essential services to the affected population was adequate. Under very difficult and dangerous conditions, humanitarian organizations were carrying out an immense lifesaving operation in Darfur. In addition, the harvest was better than the year before, and the destruction of crops by nomadic groups had been reduced. The health situation was also relatively good, with the exception of a meningitis outbreak, with 40 cases reported. Our major concern at that time was displacement of populations due to military activities in Southern Darfur, with the arrival of thousands of people in the Zam Zam camp in Northern Darfur.

The 4 March 2009 decision by the Government of Sudan to expel 13 international non-governmental organizations and to suspend the work of three local non-governmental organizations has completely altered the situation. This act directed against those indispensable organizations has resulted in an interruption in the delivery of essential humanitarian services to the affected population.

Although UNAMID does not have a humanitarian mandate, we are deeply concerned about the risk of humanitarian catastrophe, as we are the most visible representatives of the international community in Darfur and a humanitarian crisis would only further complicate our operations. That is why we support all the efforts of our colleagues in the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), who have been following and managing this situation along with the Government of the Sudan.

I turn now to the issue of the deployment of UNAMID. The efforts made by the Council and its members have been key factors in overcoming the huge challenges posed by the deployment of UNAMID. I am pleased to report to the Council that by the end of 2008 we had deployed two thirds of our troops. We have identified all the troop-contributing countries and think that by the end of this year we will be able to deploy every unit planned and thus have over 90 per cent of our authorized strength.

Unfortunately, we must still identify countries that can contribute a few essential units: logistics, transport and military utility helicopters. As I noted, we are two-thirds deployed, but due to the lack of those resources our operational capacity is far from that level. In this regard, we would like to express our particular gratitude to the Government of Ethiopia, which has agreed to provide us with five tactical helicopters.

Our cooperation with the Government of the Sudan has been good. The tripartite mechanism between the United Nations, the African Union and the Sudanese Government has worked very well and has greatly facilitated our work. UNAMID was privileged to host the fifth meeting of that mechanism on 31 March 2009.

I must mention that, after the recent fire that devastated our facilities, we were grateful again for the assistance of the Sudanese Government.

Today, UNAMID is deployed in every part of Darfur.

As I have said, we have two thirds of our military personnel deployed. In addition, thanks to our civilian police, civil affairs officers, human rights officers, political affairs officers and the staff of the Darfur-Darfur dialogue, we maintain close contacts with all parties and civil society. We monitor the situation on a

daily basis and are in a position to accurately brief the Council. UNAMID's voice is heard and listened to, and we can speak with increasing authority on the situation on the ground.

In assessing UNAMID's role, unfortunately we cannot yet claim success. Indeed, the war in Darfur continues. Civilians continue to face unacceptable risks. Millions of people are still in displaced person camps or are refugees. Given the prevailing insecurity, they cannot return to their homes or resume their normal lives. No solution has been found to remedy the great wrongs and injustices that have been committed, particularly at the height of hostilities in 2003 and 2004.

It cannot be said, however, that we have failed. Our teams are working around the clock to prevent the return of violence and killing. This preventive role is not always visible, but it is important.

In January, the JEM takeover of the town of Muhajiriya and the Government counteroffensive gravely endangered thousands of civilians. We decided to keep our forces in the town, although we were under severe pressure to leave. That was the correct decision by the Secretary-General.

When a disaster does not happen, it is not reported by the media. Muhajiriya was a disaster that did not happen. During the attacks and counter-attacks on Muhajiriya, including by aerial bombardment, nearly 10,000 civilians looking for protection gathered in the area next to UNAMID base. With the Government and JEM, we were able to negotiate the establishment of a humanitarian perimeter.

The situation in the Kalma displaced persons camp in August 2008 is well known. It, too, was a disaster that did not happen because, without UNAMID's intervention, we would have seen many more than 38 dead. Today, UNAMID is present 24 hours a day in Kalma, and our intention is to do the same in all the major displaced person camps in Darfur.

Another major source of violence is inter-tribal fighting. UNAMID is often involved in the quest for peace or the prevention of these conflicts. Just recently in the town of Khor Abeche, UNAMID stopped an incident of cattle theft from escalating into a lethal and uncontrollable intercommunal clash. In addition, the activities of our civil affairs officers, human rights officers, political affairs officers, and the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation process are promoting local reconciliation and peace. In many cases, these local agreements have helped to stabilize the situation.

On the ground in Darfur, we face day-to-day challenges. At present, our most pressing concerns include, first, the need to stabilize the humanitarian situation, which is under way. Secondly, we must respond to a diverse set of threats to security as we continue to deploy the Mission in order to reach full capability.

The mandate of UNAMID derives from the responsibility to protect, and we will be able to consider our mission accomplished only when the people of Darfur live in lasting peace and security. That will require a political settlement for the whole of the Sudan.

Before concluding, I would like to commend the extraordinary work of the military and civilian personnel of UNAMID. I would like in particular to honour the memory of our 14 colleagues who have lost their lives in the service of the people of Darfur. I sincerely believe that the role of UNAMID is increasingly recognized by the people of Darfur. In a mission such as ours, publicity is given to failures and setbacks, and successes attract little attention. But I can say without fanfare that we are making progress.

Our success is ultimately in the hands of the political leaders of the Sudan. It is their decision that will determine whether the people of Darfur can live in peace or must face the hardships of war. We need a collective international commitment, represented at the highest level by the Council, to make them understand that.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Adada for his briefing, which will be extremely helpful to Council members.

There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6113

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6113th meeting

Tuesday, 28 April 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Russian Federation	Mr. Demin
	Turkey	Mr. Ilkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2009/196)

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09-31542 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2009/196)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I propose, with the consent of the Council, to extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Choi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, contained in document S/2008/196.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Choi Young-Jin, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Choi: In 2008, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) focused much of its attention on the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular with regard to the identification and voter registration operation, for which it has provided technical, logistical and financial support. Despite the slow pace of the electoral management body, strong political will among the Ivorian political leaders for early elections enabled the electoral process to move forward.

Yet, at the outset of 2009, the momentum for an early election appears to have considerably weakened. In the background is the change of political priority among the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. The fourth supplementary agreement to that Agreement, known as Ouaga IV, has reversed the priority between elections and the reunification of the country. Under Ouaga III, which provided the political framework for the electoral momentum in 2008, elections were to take place before reunification. Under Ouaga IV, to the contrary, the de facto reunification is to take place before the elections.

Within the framework of Ouaga IV, the measures to be taken at least two months prior to the elections include, inter alia, the transfer of authority from zone commanders to préfets, the centralization of the treasury, the completion of the profiling and integration of Forces nouvelles elements into the military, police, gendarmerie and ex-combatants, and the payment of about $1,000 to each ex-combatant and militiaman. Those are tall orders. Consequently, any new electoral timeline is now predicated on the progress of the reunification process.

The experience of the year 2008 has proved that, given the electoral management body's slow pace, speedy progress in the electoral process would be possible only if there were strong political encouragement and urging. The events of 2009 so far have confirmed such a pattern. For the past four months, since the signing of Ouaga IV in December 2008, the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement have been focusing on the reunification issue. As a result, the electoral process has been struggling with a slower pace, which has resulted in further delays.

To repeat, progress in the electoral process is now contingent upon the evolution of the reunification issue. UNOCI has been assisting, as best it can, to

move the reunification issue forward. Unfortunately, however, critical elements of the reunification, such as the transfer of authority from zone commanders to préfets and the centralization of the treasury, are not progressing as envisioned in Ouaga IV. Deadlines and target dates have repeatedly been missed. The main reason for that can be found in the difference in the vision for and strategy of reunification among the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Agreement. In sum, as it stands now, the prospect for early elections and reunification cannot be described as encouraging.

However, this rather sombre reality regarding elections and reunification should not eclipse the continuing positive developments that have occurred in the field of peace and stability. In Côte d'Ivoire, we are witnessing an ever higher degree of return to normalcy of daily life, including of commercial activities. The restoration of peace is also evident in that not a single major incident has so far occurred in the identification process, which to date has crossed the threshold of 6 million people.

In that respect, the contribution made by the impartial forces in providing the general framework for security is important. Yet, within that framework, it is the Ivorian Government and the Ivorian people themselves who have made the real difference with their refined political culture of compromise. Although hampered by the transitional and coalition nature of the Government, various ministries and State institutions remain in place, and there exist around 40,000 State security forces, supported by about $200 million out of a total annual budget of over $5 billion.

The international financial institutions have made a positive move. Côte d'Ivoire has begun to benefit from the financial support programme of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Already in April 2009, a first batch of over $200 million of direct budget support was delivered to Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, a Heavily Indebted Poor Countries debt cancellation process for Côte d'Ivoire has been initiated by the World Bank and the IMF. Money being fungible, that input will lessen the financial burden of the Côte d'Ivoire Government in the field of elections and the identification process.

This complicated and mixed picture of the Ivorian political and electoral map requires some hard thinking on our part. It is now necessary for us to focus our attention both on progress in the elections process and on the negotiations on reunification. The international community and UNOCI, by virtue of their significant contribution, including my certification mandate, have been deeply engaged in the electoral process. On the other hand, in the field of reunification, our involvement has been much less, principally because of the sensitivity involved in military and security matters.

Now that the electoral process is predicated on the reunification issue, we may have to engage in some deep reflection on the Ivorian reunification problem, with a view to making some meaningful contribution to the reunification of the country and, by extension, accelerating the electoral process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Choi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to congratulate the Secretary-General on the high quality of his twentieth report (S/2009/196), which gives an update on the main developments in my country over the past three months.

Taking the opportunity offered by this meeting of the Security Council on that report, my delegation would like to outline for the Council the prospects for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement in the coming months, culminating in the holding of presidential elections in 2009, since none of the signatories of the Ouagadougou Agreement, be it President Laurent Gbagbo, Prime Minister Guillaume Soro or the facilitator, President Blaise Compaore, have any agenda other than the successful holding of presidential elections in 2009.

First, on behalf of my Government, I wish to reaffirm that political will and the genuine willingness of the major actors in the process to overcome the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, despite what some outsiders have suggested in recent weeks.

As acknowledged in the Secretary-General's report, in the two years since the Ouagadougou Agreement was signed in March 2007, significant progress has been made towards a return to normalcy in Côte d'Ivoire. That progress was reinforced by the signing on 22 December 2008 of a fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Agreement, which

paves the way for completing the reunification process and holding elections.

It is true that, despite the significant strides made in the process of emerging from the crisis, we have noted a number of difficulties and constraints regarding its implementation. Most of those difficulties — essentially logistical and financial — are being resolved. Indeed, I am pleased to announce that, as of 31 March 2009, the executive boards of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have agreed that Côte d'Ivoire is eligible to benefit from debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative (HIPC). I take this opportunity to express once again the appreciation of President Laurent Gbagbo to all our development partners, including the French Government, for their tireless support. He encourages them to continue their efforts until HIPC is concluded. With this support from the international community, we can now be less apprehensive about the rest of the process of emerging from the crisis.

The restoration of State authority and the redeployment of State administration throughout the country are nearly complete. The 156 *préfets* and *sous-préfets* for the central, northern and western zones have been nominated and appointed.

With regard to the centralization of the treasury, the redeployment of financial administration — including the treasury bank — in the central, northern and western zones is also under way. Missions have been organized to consider the feasibility of opening branches of the Central Bank of West African States in those areas.

The problems related to the transfer of authority from zone commanders to the corps préfectoral will be resolved in the coming days thanks to the deployment of 8,000 personnel seconded to the integrated command centre, including police officers, gendarmes and members of the armed forces of the Forces nouvelles. A list of those individuals will be issued this week.

To date, 6,081,625 people, out of a population of 8.6 million potential voters, have been registered to vote. With the improvements in the State's financial situation, we hope to complete the registration of nearly all potential voters by mid-June 2009.

In accordance with the recommendations made at the fourth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, held on 10 November 2008, the Independent Electoral Commission proposed a timetable for the electoral process to the Prime Minister, who passed it on to the President on 15 April 2009. According to the timetable, the presidential election could be held between 11 October and 6 December 2009. The exact date of the elections will be announced by the President in the next few days.

In conclusion, I should like to urge the United Nations not to become discouraged and the Security Council to continue its efforts to assist the people and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in effectively emerging from the crisis through the holding of elections in 2009. The most difficult phase is behind us, and we must work together to hold credible elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the first round of which should be held no later than 6 December 2009.

Once again, I wish to emphasize that the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire is not at an impasse. The political decision has already been made. The first round of the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire will be held no later than 6 December 2009.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.